FOUR TRACTS.

I. ON THE
PRINCIPLE OF RELIGION,
AS A TEST OF
DIVINE AUTHORITY.

II. ON THE
PRINCIPLE OF REDEMPTION,
WHETHER IF PREMIAL IT IS AGREEABLE, OR IF JUDICIAL CONTRARY, TO DIVINE RECTITUDE.

III. ON THE
ANGELICAL MESSAGE
TO THE
VIRGIN MARY.

IV. ON THE
RESURRECTION OF THE BODY,
AS INFERRED FROM THAT OF CHRIST, AND EXEMPLIFIED BY SCRIPTURAL CASES.

WITH
A DISCOURSE ON HUMILITY.

BY ROBERT HOLMES, B. D.
PROFESSOR OF POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
RECTOR OF STANTON,
AND LATE FELLOW OF NEW COLLEGE.

OXFORD:
PRINTED FOR D. PRINCE AND J. COOKE;
SOLD BY J. F. AND C. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD,
AND T. CADELL, THE STRAND, LONDON.
M DCC LXXXVIII.

IMPRIMATUR,

JOS. CHAPMAN,

VICE-CAN. OXON.

Maii 17. 1787.

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

THE

FOLLOWING PIECES

ARE

MOST RESPECTFULLY

AND

AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED.

The ſecond of theſe Tracts was occaſioned by the late republication of Mr. Balguy's Eſſay on Redemption.

OF THE PRINCIPLE OF RELIGION.

PART I.

SECTION I.

In what light the Divine Being muſt appear to man — deſign — nature, difference, and real exiſtence of the religious principles here conſidered.

UNDER what diſpoſition Infinite Power may act towards man, is of all queſtions the moſt intereſting to him, ſince it may ſubject him to the utmoſt evil he can poſſibly undergo, or vouchſafe more good to him than he is able to deſerve. Hence, the

Divine Being naturally and invariably becomes to mankind an object either of fear or love; and the one or other of these principles will form the foundation and character of Religion.

But to represent God as an object of human fear or love, seems also virtually to represent mankind in actual possession of some unquestionable assurance of divine indignation or favour. And this is justified by appearances in the constitution of human nature. Men not only prefer right to wrong, as such, whenever they are capable of perceiving either, but also feel pleasure or pain, hope or fear, and consider themselves as objects of divine favour or wrath, in proportion as they are conscious of the predominance of right or wrong in their characters.

A faculty of this cast, by whatever name it may be called, seems evidently assigned by the Supreme Moral Governor, not only as an informing rule of human duty in the present state

ſtate of diſcipline, but it alſo appears his inſtrument as a principle both of reward and of puniſhment. For it introduces into the heart of every individual a ſure preſage that the ultimate ſentence of God upon his conduct will juſtly and actually conform to, and conſequently ratify, that judgement, which his own moral underſtanding paſſes upon it now. And as this preſentiment of final doom accompanies the preſent judgement of man upon his own actions, the pains and pleaſures of the moral faculty appear in the nature of reward and puniſhment, and in them that retribution ſeems to commence now, which God will complete hereafter.

Thus then, the Divine Being is rendered the object of fear or love, by that light in which he ſtands of a moral and righteous Judge, who becauſe he abhors and will puniſh iniquity, and loves and will reward virtue, has aſſured them reſpectively of his wrath or favour. For with what reaſon could moral creatures, as ſuch, fear or love

him, if he really ſeemed indifferent to vice and virtue, and had given no ſure intimation that he hated and would puniſh one of them, and that he loved and would reward the other?

Indeed, the Divine Moral Government of the rational creation by ſanctions of reward and puniſhment preſent and future, as it may eaſily be aſcertained from the Scriptures, ſo may it be atteſted by an aſſignable operation upon the human mind in every age. And as far as the hope of indemnity from the penal effects of iniquity, or the apprehenſion of puniſhment reſulting from the conſciouſneſs of ſin, can be traced by their reſpective influences upon mankind, ſo far it will be found that the love or the fear of God, as an object, maintained a ruling effect, as a religious principle; and every change introduced at any time or by any cauſes in Religion, will be obſerved to have caſt out or replaced more or leſs of the one or the other principle.

As

As far, then, as their effects in forming the foundation and character of Religion, at any time, may be assignable, so far it seems that they may be applied as tests of truth and divine authority.

This will here be attempted; and to avoid anticipating impressions, which the present enquiry may occasionally leave upon the mind of the reader, it will be sufficient to observe generally, that to fix the characteristical principle of Religion, and to shew upon what precise view of the Divine Being it was at different times founded, is the design of this treatise.

One previous notice, however, is indispensably requisite. There is a certain sense, in which the love and fear of God, as an object, may be consistent. Love and reverence, affection and awe, may combine in one sensation, of exquisite interest indeed, yet of no painful disquiet. But these pages respect a mere natural dread of Omnipotence,

preſenting the arm of vengeance lifted up, and ready to deſcend. With that fear of God, in which the love of him, or of wiſdom, or of virtue, begin and advance, they have no concern; but with that only, which turns upon God the eyes of averſion, and diſcerns in him nothing but hoſtility and wrath, in man nothing but the ſlave of ſin, and the victim of puniſhment. Of the reality of its exiſtence under this character, aſſurance may be had from the words of the Jewiſh ſage, "wickedneſs, condemned by her own witneſs, is very timorous, and being preſſed with conſcience, always forecaſteth grievous things;" and from thoſe of St Paul, "there remaineth"—"a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation which ſhall devour the adverſaries."

Of ſuch an impreſſion, the love of God, as an object, will here be treated not as the aſſociate, but the oppoſite, principle. From the love of him directly flows peace and aſſurance of mind; but fear of him, in this ſenſe,

ſenſe, tends only to the production of turbulence and diſguſt. The apoſtle John contraſts them; "fear hath torment — he that feareth is not made perfect in love — perfect love caſteth out fear." And the reverſe of his remark holds equally true.

SECTION II.

The perfection of the religious principle in the earlieſt ſtate of Religion—that ſtate archetypal—Apoſtolical characters of its reſtoration — what the religious principle, when Religion is moſt perfect.

THE nature of the two principles, under preſent conſideration, being thus fixed and explained, views of their operation at different times will be requiſite to ſhew on what ground, in what caſe, and in what circumſtances they either ſtood ſingle, or ſucceeded each other, as fundamental principles of Religion.

To

To begin then with a view of Religion, in its earlieſt ſtate——

On the original condition of human nature the minds of men in all ages have dwelt with admiration and regret. For what duration of time the firſt parents of mankind preſerved that ſtate of innocence, in which they were originally placed by the Creator, is uncertain. It ſeems, however, that they, like other works of the Divine Artificer, ſubſiſted for ſome length of time "very good." From ſeveral paſſages of Holy Scripture, and among them from the Apoſtolical alluſion, "the new man, after God, is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs," the moral uprightneſs of that primœval condition may be preſumed.

In ſuch a ſtate of human nature the principle of Religion ſeems eaſily aſſignable.—With the reſemblance of divine holineſs the ſimilitude of divine happineſs apparently coincided. For in ſuch circumſtances, as man

was

was free from the conſciouſneſs of ſin, no views of divine diſapprobation had opened upon his mind. The firſt conſideration of himſelf and of all created things would aſcertain the univerſal intereſt of nature in the kindneſs of God; and experience would juſtify a preſumption that the ſame infinite power and infinite goodneſs, which had been exerted in the production of general happineſs, would alſo concur in ſupporting it. Under this impreſſion, a thankful acknowledgment of the precious gift of virtuous and happy exiſtence would ſingly fill and poſſeſs the human heart. The hope of good continually gained ſtrength, and innocence prevented any apprehenſions of evil.

Hence, during the perfect ſtate of Religion and of nature, it ſeems that love towards God may be juſtly reputed the fundamental and characteriſtical principle of Religion.

The perfection, then, of the religious principle apparently coincides with the original per-

perfections of human nature. Whilſt the image of God continued in man, as at the firſt, unſullied, there was nothing to prevent his heart from continuing under the influence of a principle, which is itſelf divine. "God is love;" and as it is the moſt noble attribute of his nature, ſo it is the moſt excellent conſtituent and capital characteriſtic of rational ſervices to him. It is now on earth the commencing ſpark of that holy flame which Religion will kindle, when adjuſted completely to the divine intention, and perfected in ſpirit and in truth hereafter in heaven.

The manifeſtation of himſelf under no other character, but that of amiable benevolence, to rational beings meriting and returning his love, was the deſign of God in creation; and when placed in another light, to reeſtabliſh that in which he once appeared, and in which he again wiſhed to look upon man, was his purpoſe in redemption. As far, then, as Religion really has its foundation

tion in the principle of love towards God, ſo far at all times it will ſeem adjuſted to divine and human perfections, and ſo far there will be evidence of its correſpondence with his primary intention, and of its truth.

The fundamental principle and character of Religion at the firſt eſtabliſhment, exhibits that archetype, of which every ſubſequent proviſional diſpenſation, of divine authority, was calculated to reſtore the partial or complete ſimilitude. Accordingly, when that reſemblance was reſtored, the reeſtabliſhment of the perfect principle of Religion is aſſerted by the Apoſtle; "for we have not received the ſpirit of fear, but the ſpirit—of love;" and both are contraſted, and the perfection of the one and imperfection of the other ſtated at ſome length in a paſſage before referred to, "herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldneſs in the day of judgment"—"there is no fear in love, but perfect love caſteth out fear—becauſe fear hath

hath torment (κολασιν, puniſhment) he that feareth is not made perfect in love."

By the degree of perfection, then, in the characteriſtical principle, we may judge, it ſeems, upon good ground, of the degree of perfection in Religion, under any ſtate of it; and it appears to correſpond completely with the excellencies of the divine and human nature, only when it is founded upon love towards God.

SECTION III.

The change in the human character—the light in which the Divine Being thereupon appeared—ſuppoſed reſult of an appeal to reaſon—the change of the religious principle on the new relation between the Divine Being and man.

UPON this footing the caſe ſtood, before a fatal revolution had enſued in the ſtate of man. But the endearing relation,

tion, eſtabliſhed at firſt between God and mankind, was miſerably reverſed by ſin. And ſince love towards God had ſingly operated as the religious principle during the continuance of human innocence, it ſeems that any alteration for the worſe in the moral character of man would be followed by a correſpondent change in the principle of Religion. Human righteouſneſs and love towards God, having ſubſiſted in union, would be likely to fail alſo together; and when contrary circumſtances, as conſciouſneſs of ſin and of divine anger incurred thereby, took place on the part of man, the religious principle, if Religion kept any ground, would alſo be ſupplanted by one of a contrary caſt. From oppoſite cauſes there would enſue oppoſite effects. As it is only with the conſciouſneſs of virtuous character, and with the aſſurance of the human heart before God, that love towards him can be compatible, ſo when ſin entered into the world, the fear of God would neceſſarily follow.

In

In the ſpontaneous effuſion of gratitude for benefits received, the foundation of divine worſhip has been frequently laid. It appears indeed with ſufficient reaſon; but they, who have advanced this opinion, ſeem right in the principle they adopt, but wrong in the place they aſſign it. When nothing except good had been received or was expected from God, he muſt have been the object of grateful and affectionate adoration. The impreſſion of his threatenings could hardly go ſo deep, as to eradicate the endearing ſenſe of his uninterrupted beneficence. But the ſame caſe can ſcarcely be preſumed to hold in circumſtances the reverſe of theſe. A ſenſe or an expectation of penal evil would eſtabliſh another intereſt in the heart. The Divine Being, who before had been only loved as a friend, would then be dreaded as an avenger; and Religion will invariably correſpond with all parts of the known relation between God and mankind.

Thus, upon the fall of man, the view in which

which the Deity appeared was new. The endearing impreſſions of divine favour, which would have remained upon the mind, if ſin had not been incurred, were obliterated by diſtreſsful views of divine diſpleaſure. If God, before the fall, had been loved from his manifeſt diſpoſition to bleſs, he was feared, after it, from his expected coming to puniſh. And whatever might be the delay of his dreaded vengeance, ſtill the ſinner foreboded it as ſure. This repreſentation appears authenticated by the language of our firſt father to his Judge, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid becauſe I was naked, and I hid myſelf." In the conduct and apparent feelings of their progenitor, his deſcendants of every age may deſcry their own. Such are the indelible characters of fallen nature when left to herſelf, betrayed, as we may find upon inſpection, more or leſs diſtinctly by the moral and religious hiſtory of mankind.

If man, when fallen from original upright-

neſs,

neſs, applied to Reaſon for an eſtimate of his condition, there appears no ſufficient ground for ſuppoſing he would obtain any real relief from that intereſting enquiry. What might be known from divine Revelation, is not here the queſtion; from the diſciples of nature only the proper anſwer muſt come; and if it is built upon nothing beyond the extent of natural knowledge, and yet is ſtrictly adjuſted to all natural feelings, it may be perhaps thus aſſigned. By an eſtabliſhed law, operating in the conſtitution of man as well as in the conſtitution of nature, ſinners invariably ſuffered either inwardly or outwardly, or in both reſpects, for the evil of their conduct. Theſe appearances aſcertained the part which God took againſt them; and as moral degeneracy gained ground in the human nature, an aggravation of the divine hoſtility muſt be expected to enſue.

It ſeems not eaſy to conceive any other reſult of an appeal to reaſon. It directed, indeed, to duty, and convinced men that ſin reigned

reigned in the human character, with the probability of becoming "more exceeding ſinful;" it ſaw the truth of the caſe, and muſt dread the conſequence. No ground appears for a juſt preſumption at the time that the judgement of God might be deſerved, and yet be eſcaped.

A ſentiment ſo full of terror would hardly fail to take the firmeſt poſſeſſion of the mind, and to fix a correſpondent impreſſion upon every religious effort it made. Love towards God, which had been the principle of religion before the Fall, would loſe its wonted hold, when ſin repreſented the divine father and friend of man in the altered light of a judge and avenger. Love, allied to ſerenity of mind and aſſured hope, would decline to aſſociate with turbulence and diſtruſt. The heart would be wholly poſſeſſed by the ſtruggle of remorſe and the preſage of vengeance.

In this ſtate of things, under the con-

ſciouſneſs of accumulated iniquities, and the "looking for of judgement," it ſeems evident that fear of God muſt take place as the fundamental or only principle of religion. A change would hardly fail to enſue in the purpoſe of worſhip. The forfeiture incurred of divine favour would ſuggeſt an earneſt endeavour to deprecate divine wrath. This might be expected; and, according to appearances, it actually engaged the general ſollicitude of mankind.

But although conſcience aſcertained that the favour of God was loſt, yet reaſon could not preſume that ever it would return. As the condition to which men were reduced had been deſerved, nothing could be pleaded or pretended againſt the juſtice of leaving them in it. And upon the idea that men would perſiſt, as they really did, in adding ſin unto ſin, their caſe would daily become more and more deſperate. If juſtice was confeſſedly an attribute of God, they could ſcarcely expect it would be cancelled by his mercy,

mercy, of which they were continually growing more unworthy.

The fact, then, ſeems to be, that theſe natural and univerſal impreſſions, reſulting from the new relation between the Divine Being and man, of judge and offender, would have a neceſſary tendency to exclude love towards God as the principle of religion, and that this effect would be certain, if nature was left to herſelf.

SECTION IV.

What became on the Fall the religious principle—in what caſe and by what means reſtrained in its operation—the divine promiſe—the ſacrificial and accepted ſign of faith therein—Abel's ſacrifice—inferences from it.

TO verify the character of fallen nature here drawn, and authorize the ſuppoſition that fear of God would conſequently uſurp the place of his love, as the religious

principle, it will be requiſite to conſult appearances, both in the religion of thoſe who adhered to the true God, and of thoſe who fell away to Gentile ſuperſtitions. Views of both caſes will ſhew where the conſequence actually was ſuch, and where, and why, it was not.

With reſpect, then, to the firſt of theſe two caſes, it may be obſerved that to reverſe the penal effects of the Fall was the purpoſe of God in his ſcheme of human redemption. It opened immediately on the irruption of ſin; and when judgement upon the offenders was pronounced, the promiſe of their future deliverance was given in conjunction with it.

As to the degree in which that promiſe was underſtood by the parties to whom it was vouchſafed, opinions are different; it appears, however, that the divine purpoſe in giving it muſt have been defeated, unleſs it actually ſuggeſted hopes of deliverance from evils incurred by trangreſſion. If it was ſo far

far underſtood, an adequate proviſion was thereby made for the neceſſity of the caſe. It gave at leaſt ſome notice that the final reſcue of mankind from penal evils, to which they were then ſubjected, had a place in the divine intention. And however indiſtinctly ſuch an intimation might be apprehended at firſt, it was likely to become more intelligible and more intereſting from incidental circumſtances, that could not at the time eaſily eſcape obſervation. It was obvious to the firſt offenders, that an irreverſible curſe had fallen upon their enemy; that they had not been curſed together with the ground; that the Divine Judge interpoſed in various inſtances with pity and tenderneſs, for their relief and accommodation, and kept up an intercourſe with them, as an inſtructer and protector, in many ways, and on frequent occaſions. Theſe and other favourable notices would certainly have ſome effect in conducting them on to greater aſſurance of hope. And accordingly it ſeems that a deliverer

from the judicial evils of the Fall was expected in the Seed of the Woman.

Here, then, the Divine Being interpoſed by a real promiſe, ſo far underſtood as to abate that terror of his judgement for ſin, under which nature would otherwiſe have laboured without alleviation. And we cannot ſay how much the frequent reflection of the ſinners themſelves, aſſiſted as it was by occaſional communications from heaven during a conſiderable interval of time, might contribute further to ſoften that fearful view in which the Divine Judge muſt appear to the mind, when the ſtate of nature at the time was known to be a ſtate of puniſhment.

That much reflection was employed upon the promiſe vouchſafed, or much light thrown upon it by divine communication, or both, during a conſiderable length of years, ſeems indeed extremely credible.

For,

For, early in the lifetime of the firſt man, faith in the promiſe was one of the indiſpenſable requiſites in acceptable worſhip. And even if the right of ſacrifice was, as many have contended, the device of Adam or of his ſons, ſtill, when offered with faith, it was viſibly accompanied with an atteſtation of divine acceptance. This of itſelf would have been ſufficient to lay a foundation for ſacrificial oblations by faith to God. But the truth ſeems to be, that faith in the promiſe was of divine requiſition, and a ſacrifice of blood, as the ſign of it, of divine authority.

In all that has been written reſpecting ſacrifices, it does not appear proved that they are of human origin. And if not, every one muſt decide between the two diſputed probabilities, by enquiring for himſelf, which of them is moſt favoured by the Scriptures.

That God by a ſenſible atteſtation accepted ſacrifice in the caſe of Abel, and in that of Noah, and approved it ſo often in

Abraham, and ſyſtematically eſtabliſhed it in the law of Moſes, are conſiderations of ſuch weight, that when they are taken together with every other intimation in Scripture, they ſeem to turn the ſcale againſt the preſumption of their human origin. What was the opinion of Moſes in the caſe ſeems plain from his repreſenting God as preſcribing it to the friends of Job.

But to proceed—Abel preſented at the altar "the firſtlings of his flock, and the fat thereof." As Moſes received a direction to ſelect the firſtlings from males only, which diſallows the interpretation of Grotius, "wool and the milk thereof;" and as the Writer to the Hebrews contraſts the blood of Abel's ſacrifice with the blood of Chriſt, preeminently ſtyled "the blood of ſprinkling," and repreſents both as ſpeaking good things in different degrees, it appears that the Hiſtorian and the Epiſtolary Writer attributed to Abel an animal ſacrifice.

"The

"The Lord had reſpect unto Abel, and" not only to him but alſo "to his offering," from whence God is alſo repreſented as "teſtifying of his gifts." It ſeems, then, that the phraſe πλείονα θυσίαν directs to a diſtinction between the animal ſacrifice of Abel and that of Cain, which conſiſted of "the fruits of the ground," as if the divine acceptance of the firſt had turned upon that difference, as well as upon that faith in which Abel was ſingle.

The "much more ſacrifice" of Abel, as it is well rendered in Wickliffe's Bible, appears ſignally and preeminently marked. And if faith in the promiſe was a requiſite, and even with it all ſacrifices were not indifferent, there was ſomething real in the external expreſſion as well as in the inward diſpoſition, and it becomes the greater difficulty to imagine a divine preſcription of the one, and not alſo of the other.

The tranſaction, then, when opened in its views upon the concurrent authority of Moſes

Moſes and the Writer to the Hebrews, appears to imply that the divine promiſe of deliverance from the penal evils of the Fall was, or might be, at this time, ſo far underſtood, as to make the ground of faith; and that a ſacrifice of blood was the appointed expreſſion of that faith, and that the juſtification of the penitent worſhipper reſulted from the divine acceptance of both. But this point will be purſued ſomewhat further in another place.

SECTION V.

The promiſe illuſtrated and confirmed by divine Revelation made to Lamech—to Noah, with a limitation to the line of Shem—to Abraham, with a limitation to his own ſeed —to Jacob, with ſeveral particular and ſignal circumſtances — general reception and belief of it.

WITH reſpect to the reception and belief of the promiſe, it might be preſumed that frequent communications with the

the Divine Being hardly paſſed without throwing additional light upon it. That they did not, however, ſeems evident from the ſubſequent circumſtances.

Lamech named his ſon, Noah, ſaying, "this ſame ſhall comfort us concerning the work and toil of our hands, becauſe of the ground, which the Lord hath curſed." The paſſage ſeems to admit of two interpretations only. If Lamech expreſſed a mere conjectural wiſh, even this will imply that one of the human race was generally expected as a deliverer from the judicial effects of the Fall. So much appears abſolutely neceſſary to make a ground for the ſentiment itſelf. But if it was prophetical, it is a clear inſtance of divine interpoſition to elucidate and confirm the promiſe. In either caſe, as much ſeems evident as the argument here requires, that the promiſe of deliverance from the penal infliction of the divine Judge was or might be ſo far underſtood, as to become a principle of religious faith.

To

To a partial confirmation of the promiſe of deliverance from penal infliction for ſin, Noah was a perſonal witneſs. A general diſplay of divine vengeance he had indeed ſeen; but he ſtill ſaw that the accompliſhment of the promiſe was rendered even more credible, by the miraculous interpoſition of its divine Author, to preſerve thoſe who might be objects of it. But ſtill further; he preſented the burnt-offering on the altar, and in purſuance of that expiatory ſacrifice, a removal in part of the original judgement for human tranſgreſſion was expreſsly made the ground of covenant with him. The language of the Divine Judge had been, "curſed is the ground;" to Noah he reverſed it, "I will not again curſe the ground any more." And in whatever he was ſeen to do for the accommodation and ſettlement of mankind, the eye of faith might behold him preparing the way for the future completion of his promiſe.

Accordingly, it kept poſſeſſion of Noah's mind,

mind, and was afterwards prophetically reſtrained by him to the line of Shem. And this limitation, as it was new, is another evidence of divine interpoſition to keep the promiſe in view.

Clear and expreſs repetitions of it were made to Abraham. To him was the Goſpel preached in theſe terms, "in thee ſhall all nations of the earth be bleſſed." Thus St. Paul aſſerts, and not without the authority of his Lord; "Abraham rejoiced to ſee my day, he ſaw it and was glad." And the revelation made to the Patriarch opened alſo a new limitation, "in thy ſeed ſhall all families of the earth be bleſſed."

The ſame promiſe was repeated and confirmed to Iſaac, under the diſtinguiſhing terms of the Univerſal Bleſſing; and again to Jacob, and by him a prediction of the coming of the Univerſal Redeemer was delivered with a particularity of circumſtances extremely ſignal.

Every

Every new light, occaſionally thrown upon the promiſe, would have ſome conſiderable effect in giving it a more firm and intereſting poſſeſſion of the religious mind. Accordingly it is repreſented as the common caſe of "many prophets and righteous men," that the eye of their faith diſcovered enough of the coming of the promiſed Deliverer, to raiſe in them an earneſt deſire of beholding it with their eyes of ſenſe.

SECTION VI.

In what light the foregoing circumſtances placed the divine character—this an exception to the general caſe of mankind—inferences from the preceding appearances.

THUS, a divine promiſe of deliverance from penal evil, to be effected by the future ſeed of the woman, preſerved the perfect principle of religion, namely, love towards God, from extinction, and the blood of the

the ſacrifice was the religious ſign of faith in that promiſe, moſt probably on the authority of divine appointment, but, if not, certainly on the ſanction of divine acceptance for the juſtification of the ſinner, notified, in one inſtance at leaſt, by a ſenſible teſtimony. Faith was reckoned to the penitent worſhipper for righteouſneſs, and with faith the altar and the burnt-offering were joint conſtituents of accepteble worſhip.

Obvious, then, is the light in which, under ſuch a ſtate of things, the Divine Being would appear. Of his judicial vengeance the depravation of univerſal nature was a fearful memorial; but of his mercy the promiſe was the ſtanding ſeal. And in proportion to the livelineſs of faith in it, the fear of divine judgement would ſubſide. However dim the eye of faith might be, and however indiſtinct the promiſe, yet enough was diſcerned, enough had been revealed, to alleviate the terror of an All-mighty avenger for ſin,

by

by an authenticated expectation of redemption from the penal curſe.

In whatever degree this view of divine mercy opened upon the mind, in the ſame proportion love towards God, which had been originally the foundation of religion, would reaſſume its place as a fundamental principle in it. Proviſion had been made to recall and re engage the affection of the human heart, and the means of propitiatory application to God had been fixed or authorized by himſelf.

Here was a plain exception to the general caſe of mankind. Among the reſt of the world, conſciouſneſs of ſin and anticipation of merited puniſhment, inſeparable from fallen nature, were not thus reſtrained from that influence of terror upon the mind, to which they were likely to proceed. Thoſe views of the divine character, which revelation had unfolded, uninſtructed reaſon did not diſcern; and of that relation between God and mankind,

kind, which his promiſe authenticated, guilt, as future appearances may ſhew, ſeemed ready to deſpair. "Thy counſel who hath known, except thou give wiſdom, and ſend thy holy ſpirit from above? For ſo the ways of them which lived on the earth were reformed, and men were taught the things which were pleaſing unto thee, and were ſaved through wiſdom. She preſerved the firſt-formed father of the world, that was created alone, and brought him out of his fall."

Theſe circumſtances laid together may perhaps ſupport the ſubſequent concluſions.—In religion, when moſt fully adjuſted to divine and human perfections, that is, when it is true and moſt perfect, love of its divine object will be the great and characteriſtical principle.—Of that love, the promiſe of a deliverer from penal evils became on the Fall the only ground—Faith in that promiſe, with a ſacrifice of blood, obtained a ſignal atteſtation

of their divine acceptance for juſtification of ſinners.

When the view of this part of the ſubject is reſumed and carried on in the proper place, it will be ſhewn that the evidence and effect of the promiſe, and the reſult of it, love towards God, received occaſional acceſſions of light and ſupport from him.

SECTION VII.

The religious principle, when revelation was rejected before and after the time of Noah—Sacrifice general—its chief purpoſe when religion was independent of divine revelation—in what light the diſciples of nature viewed the Divine Being.

SUCH was the principle and character of religion among thoſe who received the revelation of God. But among the reſt of mankind who rejected it, conſciouſneſs of ſin,

ſin and fear of puniſhment were left at full liberty to work their utmoſt effects. As all men were ſinners ſelf-accuſed, judgement was accordingly foreboded by all "unto condemnation." Diſabled by ſin from looking up to the Divine Being without terror, they gradually withdrew their eyes from him; and having wilfully turned from the light that was offered, were judicially loſt and benighted in the darkneſs they had choſen. The apoſtate from the true God ſunk into the ſlave of idolatrous ſuperſtition. But ſtill the fear of divine vengeance may be traced by its operation upon his mind.

No exception in this general repreſentation ſeems to be rendered neceſſary by that particular judgement of God, which Noah with his family ſurvived. Idolatry that prevailed before and in the days of that patriarch, revived ſoon after him. The deluge made no alteration in the nature of man. The ſame fallen ſtate of the human mind was transferred to the new world by the few

who ſurvived the general deſtruction. "Sin reigned from Adam to Moſes," and conſequently the ſame fearful anticipation of puniſhment renewed the ſame effects. And as men "refuſed to retain God in their knowledge," they were delivered up to a reprobate mind; and became full of all unrighteouſneſs; till at length, as if to deliver themſelves from the perſecution of conſcience, and reconcile their accumulation of ſins with repoſe of mind, they gradually adopted a theology, that palliated and authorized iniquity by the ſanction of divine example. "Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence; thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thyſelf; but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes."

Indeed the expedient was vain. Conſcience, the ſtanding witneſs of God againſt the guilty, continued to accuſe, and the preſage of impending vengeance to alarm. In the worſhip of falſe gods men were unable to ſhake off impreſſions of mind, which had partly

partly occaſioned their deſertion of the true one. With reluctant remorſe and tormenting fear they worſhipped and trembled.

But although the difference was ſo ſignal in the ſtate of thoſe who were or were not diſciples of revelation, in one thing they agreed. To the altar of the true God, or of a falſe one, ſacrifice was brought as the ſtanding expedient of application to him. It had been conſecrated by immemorial uſage, and deſcended from age to age by general tradition. It might have been adopted from the example of Abel in the old world, and that of Noah in the new, and the practice retained, when the riſe of it was forgotten.

However this may be, deprecation of divine wrath by ſacrifice was, apparently, the great end of religious worſhip, when Nature was left without inſtruction to her own ideas of the divine character, and to her own endeavours for relieving herſelf.

The fear of divine judgement for ſin, if not abated by a clear and atteſted promiſe of deliverance, has indeed a proper tendency to darken more and more the view of God, and to exaſperate the feelings of mankind. We may be therefore the leſs ſurpriſed at the unreſerved aſſertion of the father of Grecian hiſtory, τὸ Θεῖον πᾶν φθονερόν τε καὶ ταραχῶδες, and at the readineſs with which other diſciples of nature repeat and enforce his ſentiment. Such an unfavourable notion of the Divine Being ſtands in a forward point of view as one of the moſt ſtriking features in the religion of the Gentiles. Whether they adored one ſupreme deity under a variety of repreſentations, or conſidered their idols as real divinities, in either caſe the notion they had of any divine attribute ſeems equally aſſignable. Their ſacrifices would ſcarcely have been ſuch, as to ſeem adapted chiefly to the purpoſe of ſatiating wrath, if they had not looked upon the Divine Being as ill-diſpoſed; and their worſhip would not have appeared euchariſtical in ſo few inſtances, and deprecatory in ſo many,

many, if they had not been actuated moſt preſſingly by a fearful anticipation of his vengeance.

SECTION VIII.

The religious principle among the diſciples of nature exemplified under five heads—ſollicitude to leave no deities unappeaſed—coſtlineſs and profuſion of blood in religious oblations—to evil deities—human ſacrifices—parental ſacrifices of children—reflections on ſuch appearances.

BY what proviſion it happened that, after the Fall of man, love towards God preſerved any degree of its wonted operation as a principle of religion, has been already ſeen, and of that caſe ſome further views will occur below. But here, in religion independent of a divine promiſe, we are to inſpect effects of the oppoſite principle, of fear that caſteth out love. Some of the impreſſions

may poſſibly be detected, when ſo ſtrong was the hand that drew them. It may bring them into an eaſier compaſs of view, if they are repreſented under the five ſubſequent heads.

I. A reſtleſs ſollicitude to leave no deities without propitiation had a conſtant and univerſal prevalence. Objects of worſhip were multiplied with the utmoſt degree of extravagance; and whether they were all reputed real deities, or miniſters and mediators only with the Divine Being, ſtill they were worſhipped in relation to him, and in complication with him.

In various nations altars were erected and prieſts conſecrated to ſtrange and foreign gods; and one comprehenſive invocation included all the deities of Europe, Aſia, and Libya. It was a popular remark that worſhip was appropriated in Attica to the gods of every country and every name. When the preciſe object of worſhip could not be aſcertained,

tained, it was then directed to the Deity reſpectively concerned, and an altar was dedicated to the Unknown God, and ſometimes by his name adjuration was made. It appears, then, extremely probable that the Athenians δεισιδαιμονέστεροι, as the Apoſtle ſtyled them, exceſſively fearful of the gods, acted under a reluctance that any divine Being ſhould be unpropitiated for the people. The ſame fearful principle induced the ſtranger to worſhip the gods of the country wherein he ſojourned. There was hazard in the omiſſion of rites, which were the reputed price of their forbearance. It remained notwithſtanding incumbent upon him to adore and prefer the gods of his native land, to whom alone, if to any, obligation and gratitude devoted him. But his ſervice to theſe local and occaſional deities would be ſatisfactorily repaid, if it prevented their hoſtility to him.

Theſe and other ſimilar appearances have been frequently aſcribed to the changeful and capricious humour of Gentiliſm, or to the

the opinion that God was in all things, or to other cauſes. But my hope and endeavour is, to prevent any eye, that may go over theſe pages, from ſtopping among ſecondary and ſubordinate cauſes, and to lead it up to the firſt and fix it there. If the votaries of Gentiliſm could endure to leave any poſſible means of propitiation untried, or any divine object of it unappeaſed, it appears extremely doubtful whether they would have proved ſo inconſtant and deſultory. The ſuperſtition, the caprice, the reſtleſſneſs, that mark their religious devices, ſeem no more than effects, of which the cauſe is required. The behaviour of thoſe who ſailed with the prophet Jonah may ſuggeſt it. Each of them, having previouſly called on his own God to ſave them from the tempeſt, awakened the Prophet to call upon the Lord for deliverance. All application to their own deities for ſafety had failed; the danger became deſperate; they made one religious effort more; it was their laſt and only

only hope; they had recourſe to the God of Jonah.

II. Exceſſive coſtlineſs of religious dedications, and profuſion of blood in ſacrifices, were alſo characteriſtical effects of the ſame fearful principle. Magnificent offerings loaded the temple; and the ſacred ſhrine was rich in ſplendid depoſits, the prices of perſonal deliverance, extorted from the trembling votary by the ſenſe of danger. Fear for his ſafety kindled his devotion; and in hope to preſerve his perſon, he promiſed the ſurrender of his ſubſtance, that ſtood next in his affection. This was agreeable to the popular notion that a gift would prevail in appeaſing divine indignation, when ſupplications, not ſo ſupported, might fail.—Sacrifices were not only ſumptuous, but extremely ſanguinary. In the hecatomb animals were ſometimes accumulated in numbers far exceeding the etymological extent of the name. The ſacrificial ceremony betrayed the characteriſtical impreſſion of fear;

fear; the worſhippers ſurrounded the ſacrifice, ſcreaming out their execrations over it, and paſſionately expreſſing the hope they had that their ſins would be removed from themſelves, and be collected, together with their curſes, upon the devoted victim.

III. But to greater extremities they were driven by fear—it forced them to the infringement of natural humanity, and deluged the abominable altar with the blood of men. Slaves were devoted at Athens, and driven out under an univerſal execration to periſh in ſolitude, as victims of expiation for the people. From the age of Egyptian Iſis, Oſiris, Serapis, and of Perſian Mithras, down to that of the Roman Jupiter, and even beyond the time of Conſtantine, the direful practice of human ſacrifice prevailed almoſt in every clime and in every age. To ſuch ſacrifices, when voluntary, which ſometimes happened in the perſons of princes, chiefs, or royal virgins, the popular belief attributed ſuperlative efficacy. They betray the ſtanding opinion

opinion of the times, that the angry god, if defrauded of the required oblation, would not avert the impending calamity. Such an idea could not fail to ſpread, when often authorized by the expreſs demand and threatening denunciation of the oracle. The fate of the ſelf-devoted Decii drew from the Roman Orator this ſtrong and pathetic exclamation—"quæ fuit Deorum tanta iniquitas, ut placari populo Romano non poſſent, niſi viri tales cecidiſſent!" There is a very late as well as ſtriking inſtance of the characteriſtical ſpirit from which all ſuch offerings reſulted. Under one of their kings "tantâ fame Suecia afflicta eſt, ut ei vix gravior unquam incubuerit; cives inter ſe diſſidentes, cum pœnam delictorum divinam agnoſcerent, primo anno boves, altero homines, tertio regem ipſum, velut iræ cœleſtis piaculum, ut ſibi perſuaſum habebant, Odino immolabant."

IV. The vi lent influence of religious fear appears further from the adoration of deities confeſſedly evil, and of many deified qualities

ties, if the expreſſion may be uſed, invariably hoſtile to man. The cuſtom of ſacrificing to deities of this caſt was of high antiquity and of general prevalence. To the evil god of Egypt was offered human blood; and in various parts of Greece the worſhip of evil deities prevailed, with a view either to appeaſe and mitigate them, or to propitiate the deity himſelf in the miniſters of his vengeance. Misfortune had her altar at Rome, and malignant things their ſtated adoration. So extravagant is the number of theſe divinities, ſays her Natural Hiſtorian, that diſeaſes and plagues are reckoned amongſt them, and with trembling fear we ſtrive to appeaſe them.

From conſcious guilt and fear of puniſhment reſulted a forwardneſs of mind to look upon calamities as divine judgements. Thence directly followed an extreme ſollicitude to avert them, if poſſible, by application made, either immediately to the evils themſelves thus deified, or through them to the Divine Being, by whom they were employed. Accordingly

cordingly in parts of the world unknown to the ancients, and conſequently not within reach of their example, the rite of human ſacrifice to appeaſe an evil deity has been found to prevail. The attempt to implore the forbearance of divinities of this caſt ſuppoſes them abandoned, as they feared, to their power. They would ſcarcely have entertained ſo urgent a dread of a principle which they thought evil, unleſs they had deſpaired of their intereſt in the favour and protection of that, which they owned to be good.

V. The human mind was driven by fear of the divine avenger for ſin to exceſſes greater than theſe. Thoſe nations which Holy Scripture repreſents as moſt ſignally wicked, it deſcribes alſo as moſt ſignally cruel in religious oblations. The dependance of the latter part of the character upon the former is ſure and natural; "in whoſe hands is miſchief, their right hand alſo is full of bribes." Accordingly "all abomination, which the Lord hateth, have they done unto their

their gods." In the valleys of Canaan and of Egypt, parents aſſiſted without a pang at the burning of their ſons and daughters, whom they ſacrificed, ſays the inſpired writer, "to devils." Thus the king of Moab, when the battle was too ſore for him, "took his ſon that ſhould have reigned in his ſtead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall." The dire example was followed by moſt nations, and not only in Carthage, inhabited by deſcendants of Canaan, but even in Italy and at Rome, we may inſtance the prevalence of it.

SECTION IX.

Reflections on the foregoing appearances—what their apparent principle—the language of Micah 6, 7, characteriſtical.

HOW ſtriking appear the foregoing evidences of grievous ſtruggle and alarm, hurrying the human mind from one object of adoration and one ſpecies of ſacrifice to another,

ther, at every change enhancing the coſtlineſs or aggravating the cruelty of religious oblations?

To aſcribe theſe appearances to prieſtly ſubtlety or to oracular preſcription, will ſcarcely ſet aſide the ſuppoſition here made. There was a preeſtabliſhed feeling in the mind, of which it was eaſy to take advantage. The prieſt and the oracle touched the maſter-ſtring of the heart, already prepared to accord with their views. Had their requiſitions jarred with natural prepoſſeſſions, ſo general an uniſon would ſcarcely have enſued between them. When the public were under ſo ſtrong a diſpoſition to follow, it was an enterprize of no uncertain ſucceſs to lead.

Concluſions ought, it may be ſaid, to be cautiouſly drawn from practices of remote antiquity, ſince by paſſing through innumerable hands, ſuch are the differences of colouring they have received, that they may ſometimes appear to admit various conſtructions. But

ſtill, inferences made from them may be ſo free and unconſtrained, as to carry in themſelves ſufficient evidences of truth.

In every attempt from the ſurvey of actions to detect the principle of mind that produced them, the greateſt danger is that of ſtopping among cauſes which are occaſional and acceſſary, without aſcending to that which was primary and principal. Such appearances are ſurely of a nature beyond what it is ſufficient to call fantaſtick and extravagant, and to reckon as the reſult of no ſtronger cauſe but mere humour or devout caprice. Some common principle alone, of perpetual and reſiſtleſs urgency, ſeems adequate to the production of effects ſo prevalent, ſo ſumptuous, ſo inhuman.

Gentile ſuperſtition ſeems to form one great ſuperſtructure, of which fear of divine judgement for ſin lay at the foundation. The perplexing queſtion which guilty and fearful nature put to herſelf, ran in the words accommodated

commodated by the Prophet to the common practices of Gentiles in his time; "wherewithal ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow myſelf before the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?" If nature could have ſuggeſted the anſwer, her diſciples had been at reſt. But unable to look up to the Divine Being with other eyes than thoſe of guilt, they beheld him ſurrounded with terrors; and parted from that anchor of the ſoul, the hope of his favour, without any known means of recovering it, they drove up and down and found no haven of repoſe.

And it is to be feared that no one, who refuſes all inſtruction but what may be derived from nature, will find himſelf able to make out his way to religious aſſurance of mind. He may poſſibly have ſome ſucceſs

in beating down and cruſhing the ſenſibility of his heart; but if he permits it to feel, it will ſhew him his deſert of puniſhment, but not his indemnity.

The certainty of deliverance from the penal effects of ſin was authorized at the firſt by the promiſe of God, and cannot be traced by any appearances where that promiſe was unknown or rejected. Nature, on the contrary, ſeems univerſally to have left perſonal puniſhment to be dreaded, as the unavoidable conſequence of perſonal iniquities. To duty indeed nature directs, and condemns the ſinner in his own judgement and conſcience; but as to deliverance from puniſhment in caſe of tranſgreſſion, it is blind and ſilent. Repentance for paſt ſins, in its utmoſt ſtrength, did always, and, according to appearances it may be expected, will always coincide with a "fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation," without a ſpecial promiſe of indemnity to break that coincidence; and upon rejection of the divine proviſion, when fully revealed,

revealed, for accompliſhing that promiſe, the fear of guilty nature holds unremoved. This is the Apoſtolical argument, and actual appearances have been found, upon enquiry, to ſupport it.

SECTION X.

Apparent ſtruggle of Philoſophers under the ſame conſciouſneſs of ſin and fear of puniſhment—They and the vulgar incurred different extremes—Atheiſm—character of God not moral—ſimply beneficent—indifference of actions—opinion of neceſſity.

THE diſtreſsful view of the divine character, when drawn by nature without aid from revelation, and the clear and forward light which fear of judgement for ſin will aſſume without a divine promiſe of redemption, have been ſhewn from the general practices and religious extravagancies of the Gentiles. And in detecting the agency

of a principle ſuppoſed to be natural, the proper and direct appeal lies rather to the bulk of mankind, than to particular ſages or ſchools. Philoſophy might indeed mark that fear of divine judgement, which has been here exemplified, as a ſingularity and weakneſs of character, and might be led by force of reaſoning to look upon the whole ſyſtem of Gentile ſuperſtitions with an early diſguſt, to which the generality of men were ſlowly conducted by weariſome experience. But, to omit that philoſophical invectives againſt this perplexing fear of the Divine Judge are evidences of its real exiſtence and acknowledged prevalence, it may well be queſtioned whether philoſophers alſo, as diſciples of nature only, did not generally betray that their own hearts were really, however reluctantly, open to ſenſations common to mankind. Under conſciouſneſs of ſin and expectation of divine judgement they indeed ſeem not without their ſtruggle. Apparently, the difference between many of them and the vulgar lay chiefly in the difference of extremes

to

to which the ſame principle reſpectively conducted them.

I. One of theſe extremes was Atheiſm. The opinion was recommended as a refuge from the oppreſſive terror of religion; and the conſcious ſinner often accepted the ſhelter it offered him from the dread of divine judgement for ſins paſt, and even ſecurely proceeded in the meditated crime.

II. Others, who admitted the exiſtence, denied the moral character of the Divine Being. Diſguſted with the vulgar ſuperſtitions, and diſſatisfied with Atheiſm, they ſought a ſecurity in the midway of the two extremes. Of the ſuppoſed indifference and neutrality, or merely phyſical and local operation, of Divine Providence, the avowed conſequence was, that fear of penal inflictions by the moral Governor was ſet aſide.

III. Another opinion, that divine power was ſimply beneficent, was alſo likely to en-

gage the reception of thoſe, who dreaded the evil of puniſhment for ſin. As the repreſentation of the divine character, under a diſpoſition to produce all poſſibilities of good to all perſons in all caſes, was plainly irreconcileable with the ſtanding conſtitution of nature, the probability is greater that it was embraced chiefly for the ſake of the relief it ſuggeſted to the fear of divine judgement for ſin. Furor eſt timere ſalutaria, was the declared inference from it.

And if ſome reſolved the whole character of the Divine Being into abſolute benevolence, others contended that wrath could not be attributed to him. Hence Porphyry imputes ſupplicatory and ſacrificial worſhip of the gods, upon ſuppoſition of their anger, to the ſuggeſtion of evil ſpirits; and the Epicurean antagoniſt of Origen, upon the principles of his maſter, denies the poſſibility that men can incur divine diſpleaſure.

IV. Others,

IV. Others, to the ſame effect ſpeculating upon actions, aſſerted that the good and evil of them were not in nature, but in cuſtom only. The point of convenience was, that if the moral conſcience of man and the provincial rule and cuſtom repreſented them differently, the authority of the latter was concluſive againſt that of the former. Actual ſin was to be determined only by the law and practice of the country; and conſequently if men, on account of their conduct, had nothing to dread from the magiſtrate, they had no more to fear from God.

V. Another ſuppoſed refuge from the fear of divine vengeance for ſin lay in the opinion of the neceſſity of human actions and human will. The ancients and moderns may perhaps take different ways, but come to the ſame concluſion, that no action could be, is, or will be, contrary to the intention of the Author of nature. To this favourite poſition what was the real inducement at all times may be eaſily conjectured. "If Minos would judge

judge righteouſly, he will puniſh Fate, and not Siſyphus"— ſays an old apologiſt for the doctrine.—" Upon the ſcheme of neceſſity, human actions, if they have any moral turpitude at all, muſt involve our Creator in the ſame guilt," ſays a modern. As to the opinion, the only point in preſent view is, the ſhelter it offered from the dread of divine judgement for ſin.

Thus the philoſophical opinions of ſages, as well as the ſuperſtitious perplexities of the vulgar, ſeem to carry aſſignable appearances of their ſtruggle under the fear of divine vengeance for ſin, however ſtudiouſly they may have concealed it. That univerſal principle ſeems to have ſet the heart in motion; and the urgency of it appears in the efforts every where made, and the ſpeculative theories adopted, to palliate or remove it. Without a view of the divine promiſe of deliverance from the penal effects of iniquity, nature had nothing to ſet up, as a valid and truſty antidote to the fear of puniſhment.

That

That repentance alone for paſt ſins would ever be accepted in the place of that virtue, to the continual exerciſe of which mankind had been bound in duty and in reaſon, was a preſumption, of which no traces appear. From a dread of the Divine Judge the vulgar ſought relief by manifold endeavours to ſatiate and diſarm him; the philoſopher by principles calculated to lull and benumb the heart. The branches were different, but the root was apparently the ſame.

OF THE

PRINCIPLE OF RELIGION

UNDER THE

PATRIARCHS AND THE LAW.

PART II.

SECTION I.

The imperfect principle of religion takes place or diſappears in the ſame proportion as the promiſe—Abel's ſacrifice reſumed—Reaſon and nature of ſacrifices in this ſtate of religion—Standing ſacrifices for ſin were animal burnt-offerings—What the religious principle under theſe circumſtances.

THE preceding pages have tended to ſhew, that in conſequence of the Fall it became a very intereſting point whether there were any, and, if any, what means of

of appeaſing divine wrath and averting puniſhment expected for ſin. And we have ſeen the inability of Gentile religioniſts and Gentile ſages, without any means of divine appointment, and without a divine promiſe of final deliverance from penal evils, either to remove or ſupport that fear of judgement, to which conſciouſneſs of ſin devoted them. Particularly in Gentile religion the operation of that fear has been exemplified by ſome diſtinct views of its effects. The apparent character of the divine moral Governor, and the principle of religious worſhip, have been found to be partly or totally different, according as he was viewed with the eyes of human Innocence before the Fall, or of Guilt after it.

As Love towards God, the original and perfect principle of religion, maintains no operation if the promiſe diſappears; ſo alſo, in whatever degree the promiſe intervenes and acts upon the mind, fear of God, the imperfect principle of religion, will recede proportionably.

portionably. This branch of the general argument has been opened already, and is now to be reſumed and extended to further views.

The divine acceptance of a ſacrifice of blood offered with faith in the promiſe of redemption from the penal conſequences of the Fall, was, as we have already ſeen, aſcertained by ſignal revelation. And there appears no aſſignable reaſon for ſuppoſing that this important point was not authenticated earlier than the ſacrifice of Abel. But even if no earlier, in his inſtance, at lateſt, in conſideration of faith in the promiſe and of the blood of his ſacrifice, God teſtified "of his gifts, that he was righteous." Thus the ſacrificial blood of Abel ſpoke things ſo good, that it reſted only in the blood of the Redeemer himſelf to ſpeak better.

Upon the authority of the Epiſtolary Writer to the Hebrews, and on view of the paſſage in Geneſis, the ſacrifice of Abel was before repreſented as animal, and on that account,

count, πλείων θυσία, "a much more ſacrifice" than that of the fruits of the ground, with which it was contraſted.

From the fact, then, it appears, that faith in the promiſe without the death of the ſacrifice, and the death of the ſacrifice without that faith, would in either caſe have been leſs than it had ſeemed good to the Deity to accept and authorize. And ſince the ſacrifice of an animal had weight in the caſe, at leaſt ſo far as to conſtitute one inducement with the Divine Being to teſtify of the offerer "that he was righteous," the queſtion ariſes as to the ground of this proceeding. If it lay in the efficacy of animal ſacrifices, God would ſcarcely, we may think, have excepted afterwards to their ſufficiency for atonement. By the ſacrifice only of the Lamb of God, for the "redemption of tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt teſtament" and before it no leſs, the promiſe was to be fulfilled.

It ſeems, then, that animal ſacrifice became a real conſideration only by ſhewing forth the Lord's death till he came at firſt, in the ſame manner as the breaking of bread and the effuſion of wine, according to his own inſtitution, became ſo by ſhewing forth his death till his coming again. A ſacrifice of blood, under the divine ſanction, had a repreſentative and ſacramental virtue, and ſo far was a real ground of divine acceptance for the juſtification of faithful penitents. The nature of ſacrifices in true religion ſeems ſo peculiar and appropriated, that they cannot be interpreted juſtly upon Gentile ideas. They had no where any other, but a relative value; and in Gentiliſm that relation, which alone could give them effect any where, did not ſubſiſt. There they were ſingle objects; and the ideas formed of them, as ſuch, could have no proper application to caſes, wherein they were conſidered as repreſentative and ſacramental oblations.

But to return— After the ſacrifice of Abel

it

it appears evident that faith in a promiſed Redeemer became an eſtabliſhed principle. This was before exemplified in the words of Lamech the contemporary of Adam on the birth of Noah, and in other inſtances, particularly that of Abel's ſacrifice.

Of Abel's caſe it was alſo an effect that ſacrifices for ſin commonly conſiſted of animal burnt-offerings. Thus, Noah took of every clean beaſt, and offered burnt-offerings, and the Lord thereupon ſaid in his heart, "I will not again curſe the ground any more." And Job offered burnt-offerings according to the number of his ſons, on days appropriated reſpectively to each of them, and ſaid, "it may be my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts;" and ſimilar offerings for atonement were preſcribed to each of his friends. So afterwards, when David came to ſacr ice that the plague might be ſtayed, "behold, here be oxen for burnt-ſacrifice," was the language of Araunah. There

was no particular direction in the caſe, the ſtanding cuſtom ſuggeſted his offer.

Thus the ſervant of the true God was enabled to abate the natural apprehenſion of penal ſufferings, by a known promiſe of future deliverance, and by an oblation, which had been certainly accepted. To his eye divine diſpleaſure appeared ſoftened by goodneſs, and love towards God might therefore operate with him as a principle of religion. This was the ſtate of things under a ſtanding Revelation, occaſionally repeated and confirmed by new communications from heaven.

But ſtill, as the accompliſhment of the divine promiſe continued an object of faith, in proportion as faith was weak or lively, fear or love of God, as an object, would revive more or leſs, and not entirely, even in that religion, which was founded upon divine revelation. A degree of fear would remain, equal to the imperfection of love, ſince

ſince the latter, only when it is perfect, caſteth out the former. The principle of love towards God was but in a ſtate of revival and improvement, unfolding itſelf indeed more and more, yet ſtill ſhort of that perfection which it poſſeſſed in the beginning and might finally reach.

SECTION II.

The perfect principle of religion more fully reeſtabliſhed under the law—the means therein authorized—the ſame with thoſe previouſly accepted in the caſe of Abel—the character of God, as author of the law—illuſtration thereby given to the promiſe—apparent effect of this upon Moſes.

HERE then we may change the view, and proceed to obſerve the principle of love towards God regaining a much more conſiderable portion of its original influence, as ſoon as revelation explicitly declared the divine acceptance of ſacrifice for redemption.

The promiſe, delivered, as we have ſeen, ſo early, after having been frequently elucidated and enforced by divine revelation, was confirmed with much leſs reſerve at the delivery of the Jewiſh law. It was then declared that burnt-ſacrifices for ſin, which any of the congregation might offer unto the Lord, ſhould upon due performance of certain appointed rites in making the oblation be accepted as means of deliverance from the penal effects of ſin. The prieſts, it was commanded, "ſhall burn all upon the altar, for it is a burnt-offering, an oblation made by fire for a ſweet ſavour unto the Lord." Aaron alſo was directed to make reconciliation upon the horns of the altar of incenſe once in a year with the blood of the ſin-offering in the day of reconciliation; "once in a year ſhall he make reconciliation upon it, throughout your generations, this is moſt holy unto the Lord." In another place the Lord ordered Moſes to offer every day a calf for reconciliation. And with reſpect to animal offerings it was declared generally, "the

life

life of the fleſh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for the ſoul."

Here the very means were expreſsly reeſtabliſhed, which God had before authorized in the caſe of Abel. Of the ſame means the end alſo was the ſame. In the inſtance of Abel, "God teſtified of his gifts that he was righteous;" and to theſe Moſaical oblations reconciliation and atonement were expreſsly annexed. It may then be repeated here, that apparently the ſacrifices of the law, if offered with faith in the promiſe, had a repreſentative and ſacramental virtue, as ſhewing forth the Lord's death till he came to offer up the ſacrifice of himſelf for the redemption of tranſgreſſions under that teſtament. Upon this ground they were accepted for temporal redemption; eternal redemption was to be obtained by the "much more ſacrifice" of the Son of God, whoſe blood would therefore ſpeak better things than either that of Abel, or that of the law.

In theſe ordinances, and in others of ſimilar effect, God vouchſafed to his people aſſurances of reconciliation with himſelf, and of redemption from puniſhment. Thus the divine mercy, which had been partially revealed at ſeveral preceding periods, was diſplayed much more diſtinctly at the ſettlement of of the Moſaic ritual. Declarations ſo direct and explicit that God, notwithſtanding his neceſſary juſtice, would grant indemnity to the guilty, could not fail to animate the faith, and aſſure the hearts of his people. Divine goodneſs would be placed in a light more ſtriking and endearing than before, by this new alleviation of the terror of divine judgement; and proportionably as God was now feared the leſs he would certainly be loved the more. Characteriſtically, then, as author of the Law, that is, amiably, his own proclamation deſcribed him; "the Lord, the Lord merciful and gracious, ſlow to anger, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, reſerving mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin."

One

One great end, then, the law ſufficiently anſwered. If the ſervant of God in the early ages of the world, relying upon the divine acceptance of ſacrifice with faith in the promiſe for juſtification of ſinners, approached the ſacred altar and preſented his oblation to God with love, it may be preſumed that the deſcendant of Abraham would look up with great increaſe of affection to the God of his fathers, when he diſcerned in the Moſaic diſpenſation the nearer approach and opening brightneſs of that promiſe of redemption from penal evils, which, although ſeen indeed by their eyes of faith, yet appeared to them at greater diſtance and with leſs preciſion. And whoever had entertained the livelieſt faith in that promiſe, would be moſt likely to perceive immediately that the Moſaical eſtabliſhment of atonements and ſacrifices for ſin, virtually recognized and ſupported it.

It may not be impoſſible to exemplify this in the conduct of Moſes. When interced-

ing for the people who had ſinned by the worſhip of the golden calf, he urged in their behalf the divine promiſe to the fathers, "remember Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, thy ſervants, to whom thou ſwareſt by thine own ſelf and ſaidſt unto them, I will multiply your ſeed as the ſtars of heaven, and all this land, that I have ſpoken of, will I give unto your ſeed, and they ſhall inherit it for ever." This interceſſion was offered before the glory of the Lord had paſſed by him. But during his ſecond abode in the mount, no ſooner had the proclamation of the divine mercy, grace, and forgiving goodneſs, been made ſo ſtrongly in his hearing, than he "made haſte, and bowed himſelf to the earth and worſhipped, and ſaid, O Lord, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy ſight, that the Lord would now go with us, and pardon our iniquity and our ſin." He could not indeed be ignorant of the divine beneficence; but the characters of mercy, grace, and goodneſs, which he had heard the proclamation attributing determinately to God, made ſo ſudden

and

and ſtriking an impreſſion on his mind, that he took from them immediate occaſion to implore forgiveneſs of the national ſins, although he had not at the time any particular cauſe or ſubject of interceſſion.

If by the words, "pardon our iniquity," Moſes ſhould be thought to refer to the laſt ſin of Iſrael, the worſhip of the molten image, it will follow on that idea, that he has reſumed the ſubject, but changed the terms of his interceſſion; in one inſtance, he urged the univerſal and the peculiar promiſe made to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob in behalf of his people, but in the other he inſiſted on the characters aſſumed in the divine proclamation. And he took the ſame ground of interceſſion for thoſe who murmured; "now I beſeech thee let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou haſt ſpoken, ſaying, The Lord is ſlow to anger, and of great mercy, and forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin."

From

From this particular circumſtance in the conduct of Moſes it may poſſibly appear to others as upon the whole it appears to me, that he immediately perceived in the characters of divine mercy, and forgiving goodneſs, which the proclamation aſſumed and the legal inſtitution exemplified, a confirmation of the univerſal promiſe to the fathers; and alſo, that he felt in the tenor of that proclamation ſomething ſo peculiarly endearing and cogent, that he could not forbear to offer inſtant interceſſion for his people, grounded upon the divine characters then newly revealed with ſuch diſtinct particularity. It may be thus accounted for; the law conſiderably illuſtrated and verified the promiſe of the univerſal bleſſing by eſtabliſhing a ſyſtem of atonements, and thereby mitigating the fear of puniſhment for ſin; whence it naturally happened that the characters of "merciful, gracious and forgiving," which God had applied to himſelf as author of the law, ſhould thus ſtrongly engage the notice of Moſes, and take the lead in his mind. The promiſe had made

and

and the proclamation then renewed ſome diſcoveries of divine mercy, but the latter revelation was far more expreſs than the former. The proclamation and the law threw a ſtriking light on the promiſe, and intimated more explicitly than ever, that it implied a divine purpoſe of granting indemnity to ſinners. From previous and indeterminate declarations of the divine purpoſe he turned to the laſt and the cleareſt, and reſted his interceſſional entreaty upon it.

SECTION III.

In what degree the original principle of religion was reſtored by the law—oppoſite characters in the proclamation when the divine glory paſſed before Moſes—evidences of imperfection in the law.

BUT whatever effect theſe divine ordinances of mercy and grace might have in recalling and reinſtating love towards God, as the religious principle, yet many circumſtances

circumſtances ſhew that it did not return unmixed and perfect, and reſume all that influence in religion, which it had poſſeſſed at the beginning. For upon comparing the characters, which the Lord aſſumed in the proclamation of his name, with thoſe notions of him which the appointment of ſacrifices and offices for propitiation, as in the law, would naturally ſuggeſt, we ſhall find them ſimilar and agreeing in kind, but not in degree. Ordinances of atonement for ſin, of reconciliation to the ſinner, and of redemption, were indeed ſo many acts of mercy, of grace, and abundant goodneſs: but forbearance of puniſhment, reconciliation to ſinners, and redemption, in the ſenſe and to the extent in which they muſt be underſtood in the law, are not together conſiderable enough to fulfil the plenteouſneſs of the divine grace and goodneſs.

In truth, the Moſaic diſpenſation brought relief but not remedy; and however this clearer diſcovery of the loving-kindneſs of the

the Lord, might comfort and encourage the deſcendants of Abraham, yet they were not enabled by it to comprehend the full diſplay and conſummation of his purpoſes of grace to mankind.

For that the Lord was merciful, but that he would not "make the wicked innocent," that he reſerved mercy for thouſands, but yet that he would viſit "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the childrens' children," however different characters, were nevertheleſs aſſumed by the Lord in the ſame proclamation. It was therein at once declared, that promiſed mercy ſhould not induce impunity, and that the abundance of forgiving grace ſhould not overrule the imputation of the guilt of the fathers to the children. In other inſtances alſo, forgiveneſs did not prevent a denunciation of wrath. When Moſes offered interceſſion for thoſe, who had provoked the Lord by murmuring, he referred to the ſubſtance and tenor of the divine proclamation; "I beſeech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according

cording as thou haſt ſpoken, ſaying, the Lord is ſlow to anger, and of great mercy, and forgiving iniquity and ſin, but not making the wicked innocent, and viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." The anſwer of God was gracious, "I have forgiven it at thy requeſt;" but an exception and reſervation of puniſhment immediately ſucceeds, "notwithſtanding, as I live, all thoſe men, which have ſeen my glory, and my miracles, and have tempted me theſe ten times, and have not obeyed my voice, certainly they ſhall not ſee the land whereof I ſware unto the fathers, neither ſhall they, that provoke me, ſee it." So that the forgiveneſs obtained by the interceſſion of Moſes did not totally remove the penal conſequence of undutiful murmurs; there ſtill remained a judicial excluſion of offenders from the promiſed land.

From theſe and other inſtances which might be produced to the ſame effect, it appears that the Moſaic covenant, however it

atteſted

atteſted and exemplified divine grace and goodneſs, was not delivered without very aſſignable limitation and abatement.

Indeed light and obſcurity uſually meet in the ſame diſpenſation of heaven, eſpecially in caſes, like that before us, of prophetical revelation; as if it was the purpoſe of God, to animate human wearineſs, but ſtill to keep up the exerciſe of faith, and in ſome meaſure to reward, without relaxing, the patience and hope of thoſe who wait for him.

In the inſtance now under conſideration, the releaſe of ſinners from perſonal ſufferings, however it might comfort the heart and conciliate the love of man, was nevertheleſs but a diſtant ſtep towards the accompliſhment of the gracious deſigns of God.

The imperfection of the law of Moſes for every purpoſe, except that for which it was intended, which was only partial and introductory, is evident on every view. The

Writer

Writer to the Hebrews has ſtated the inſufficiency of it, from the failure of the Levitical ſacrifices, "to make the comers thereunto perfect in things pertaining to the conſcience," which is the indiſpenſable requiſite in every offering for ſin. The legal inſtitutions formed a temporary ſyſtem of religious diſcipline; they related "to meats and drinks and waſhings, and carnal ordinances impoſed on them until the times of reformation." All of theſe principally regarded the body, and ſcarcely affected the mind, and were therefore inſtruments of external rather than of inward purification. But, with a view to the argument before us, the defects of the ſacrifices for ſin under the law may be thus briefly repreſented. They failed on account of their number; many of them were particularly reſtrained, as inſtruments of expiation, to a few caſes only.—They were periodical; ſacrifices to be repeated year by year, and even day by day continually, had not a permanent but only a temporary effect—They were national and limited; Iſrael had been

been choſen excluſively for the people of God, although the promiſed bleſſing had been delivered in univerſal terms.—But in one indiſpenſable point they were ſignally deficient. The Lord commanded the prieſt to wear upon his forehead a plate of pure gold with this inſcription, "Holineſs to the Lord," that thereby he might bear the iniquity of the offerings; "it ſhall always be upon his forehead," ſaith God, "to make them acceptable before the Lord." The inſufficiency of the Moſaical offerings was thus expreſſively declared by their divine author, at the time of his preſcribing them. In a word, the Levitical ſacrifices were defective in theſe principal inſtances; that atonement and redemption, of which they were means, were tranſitory, and required to be renewed by ſtated repetitions of the offerings—it was provincial and not univerſal—and the very victims were exceptionable, and of courſe inadequate. If they were not completely adapted to make all men, and that for ever,

perfect in all things " pertaining to the conſcience," they might, it is poſſible, contain the partial tranſcript, but not the real ſubſtance, of a ſufficient expiatory ſacrifice; they might exhibit the ſhadow, but not the very image, of the good things of promiſe.

SECTION IV.

The natural concluſion from the foregoing appearances in the Law — that facilitated by the teſtimony of the Prophets—the prophecy of Moſes of another prophet like to himſelf —the prophecy by Jeremiah of a new covenant—divine characters in the proclamation to Moſes, and in that prophecy of Jeremiah, contraſted—reflection upon their difference.

THUS, however love towards God, upon enlarged views of his mercy, might be encouraged, and the fear of his judgement for ſin yet further abated, by the Moſaic ſcheme of atonements, it was nevertheleſs

theleſs certain and obvious, that the ſacrifices for ſin, under the law, were depreciated by the ſame divine authority that appointed them. At the very time when the law was delivered, the Lord proclaimed that he would not "clear the guilty," but would viſit "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children," and though he reſerved "mercy for thouſands," yet that he reſerved puniſhment alſo for "the childrens' children." There appeared therefore conſiderable reaſon for concluding, that plenary redemption, the hope of which had been at firſt authoriſed and repeatedly confirmed by the promiſes of God, was not fully accompliſhed by the law. Yet ſince it was inconceivable, that God would deliver promiſes without fulfilling them, and require faith without rewarding it, the pious deſcendant of Abraham upon reflection would be induced even by the law itſelf to carry his view forward; and would gradually become aſſured that deliverance from the penal effects of ſin, which had been promiſed of old, although indeed

confirmed and partly accompliſhed by the law of Moſes, yet remained to be fulfilled by other means in the ſeaſon ordained of God.

This expectation would be fixed upon his mind by the teſtimony of the Prophets, as well as by the evidence of the Law. For example—the prediction of Moſes, that God would raiſe up from among them a prophet, like unto himſelf, could be verified only in the perſon of another lawgiver and another mediator between God and his people. This became more and more plain from ſeveral occaſional prophecies, all of them relating to the ſame divine meſſenger predicted by Moſes, and deſcribing him as a lawgiver and mediator. But the prophecy of Moſes was ſet in a very clear light by another of Jeremiah; "behold! the days come, when I will make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael and with the houſe of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." Since then

then the Moſaic characters of lawgiver and mediator would certainly be ſuſtained by the meſſenger of the new covenant, it was reaſonable that they, who believed the divine miſſion of Moſes and Jeremiah, ſhould expect the predicted prophet, like unto Moſes, in the perſon of that meſſenger, and a new diſpenſation of grace in that covenant, which was to be "not according to the covenant," given by Moſes.

The deſcendant of Abraham might alſo be enabled to diſcern, upon a careful view, what relation would ſubſiſt between that new covenant and the divine promiſe of mercy given to the fathers, by comparing the characters, which God aſſumed in the proclamation made to Moſes, with thoſe which the prophecy of Jeremiah attributed to him. Conſidering each of them as deſcriptive of the divine character in reſpect of that covenant, to which either of them referred, he might have ſeen reaſon to ſuppoſe, that as far as the characters of the proclamation

and the prophecy agreed, ſo far the covenant of Moſes, and the new covenant predicted by Jeremiah, would, in the end, equally confirm, and equally illuſtrate, the promiſes of mercy to the fathers: and, on the contrary, as far as the characters in both diſagreed, that ſo far there would be, in the one covenant or the other, a manifeſt advantage and preeminence in confirming and illuſtrating the promiſes.

Let us then attend to this compariſon, and briefly contraſt the terms of the prophecy and the proclamation with each other.

At the delivery of the law, the Lord aſſumed the characters of "merciful, gracious, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin"—when he delivered by Jeremiah the promiſe of that new covenant, he repreſented himſelf in the ſame character; "I will forgive their iniquities." Both then of theſe covenants were diſpenſations of mercy, grace, and pardon, for ſo far the two deſcriptions of the divine character

character run in the ſame ſtrain. But they agree no further: and the ſubſequent difference plainly marks that very circumſtance, in which the predicted covenant would excell that, which God had made with the fathers at their coming out of Egypt. The proclamation is cloſed with a denunciation, that God will not "clear the guilty," but that he will viſit "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the childrens' children"—but the prophecy of Jeremiah is concluded with a promiſe, "I will remember their ſin no more." There is the utmoſt contrariety between them. That reſervation of puniſhment, which remained in the firſt of the two revelations, is entirely obliterated in the ſecond; and all penal viſitation for paſt ſin is excluded for ever. So that not only the imperfection of the Moſaic covenant was obvious; but alſo, the comparative preeminence of that new covenant, which was to ſucceed it, and the entire accompliſhment therein of "the mercy promiſed to the fathers," might be aſcertained upon prophetical evidence. The

Apoſtle Paul, treating of the difference of theſe two covenants, applies a paſſage of Scripture, wherein God is repreſented as contraſting them, and, in an animated manner, enforcing the one above the other by this very diſtinction; "for this is my covenant unto them, when I ſhall take away their ſins."

SECTION V.

Religious ſtate of the Jew—of the Gentile—the comparative advantages of the firſt great, but not free from material exception—the comparative diſadvantages of the latter without any alleviation.

IF then the bulk of mankind, diſciples of nature only and not of revelation, and therefore without promiſe of redemption from the puniſhment of ſin, ſtill laboured under the dread of wrath to come, ſlaves at once of guilt and fear; the deſcendant of Abraham, who beheld God thus gradually withdrawing

withdrawing the veil, which kept the promiſed diſpenſation of plenary deliverance from open view, would doubtleſs mitigate the fear of judgement by an endearing proſpect of his mercy.

Love towards God, the perfect principle of religion, would therefore reſume, under the law, a conſiderable portion of its original influence; but only ſo much of it, as ſuited a ſtate of advancement to that perfect maturity of ſtrength, which alone could enable it totally to caſt out fear. The ſpirit of bondage to fear would not be extinguiſhed but by a full eſtabliſhment of the title to cry, Abba, Father, by the ſpirit of adoption. In a word; the deſcendant of Abraham, conſcious of ſin, and perceiving that a ſufficient expiation of it was not yet made to the divine judge, would remain in ſome ſubjection to that fear of his judgement for iniquity, which could be completely caſt out only by an entire accompliſhment of the promiſe. But in him that fear would be abated in a degree

degree of proportion to his faith in the promiſe of redemption: and that promiſe was enforced and partly verified in the law, which contained a prediction of the coming of another lawgiver and mediator, to eſtabliſh a new covenant of unreſerved indemnity for ſinners.

Upon comparing then the caſes of the Jew and the Gentile, the ſpiritual neceſſities of both ſeem eaſily diſcernible.—Univerſal conſciouſneſs of guilt fixed upon the human heart a fearful ſenſe of the divine Avenger for ſin. The attempt to remove this apprehenſion by ſacrificial propitiations was of the ſame univerſal extent. But the manifold efforts of the Gentiles for this purpoſe had not removed, nor even alleviated, their fear of divine judgement.

The diſciples of revelation, having received the promiſe, were alone enabled by faith to aſcertain the divine purpoſe of mercy. The Gentile ſacrifices were expedients

adopted

adopted from tradition, and applied ignorantly as remedies of fearful guilt; but the ſin-offerings of the Jews were rites of ſpecial appointment for atonement. The former gave no relief to the diſtreſs of the heart, but the latter were authentic ſigns of a covenant of grace. The former, if found upon long trial unprofitable, would naturally fall into diſuſe, and moſt probably leave mankind, deſtitute of any religion, to labour on with an aggravation of guilt and fear: but the latter, being inſtituted expreſsly for a ſeaſon, would, according to the plain tenor of divine prophecy, introduce and eſtabliſh an unexceptionable and everlaſting diſpenſation of mercy. So manifeſt and important was the advantage of the Jew, in excluſively poſſeſſing "the oracles of God."

But ſtill, the law, in many caſes, provided no offering for the tranſgreſſion, and delivered up the offender to puniſhment without preſent

preſent means of atonement. It required perfect obedience under penalty of a curſe, and enjoined ceremonies ſo frequent and burdenſome, that even ſingular zeal and piety were unable to maintain their uniform obſervance; "they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, ſaith the Lord." As the Jew had failed in well-doing, his ſin lay at the door; and conſequently the fear of a divine avenger would have preſſed upon his mind with all its natural weight, if he had not been taught and encouraged to rely upon the coming of that covenant, in which mercy would finally rejoice againſt judgement.

Of this the direct reverſe appears in the caſe of the Gentile. He had been ſtruggling for a length of time, under the dread of divine wrath, without any relief or abatement of his fears. He coud not deviſe victims more precious than the lives of men, or more dear than the blood of his children, even

even when he felt that thoſe lives had been offered up, and that blood poured out ſo long and ſo profuſely in vain. We cannot avoid looking back with unfeigned pity upon him, ſtill ſeeking reſt, but finding none; and, at the ſame time obſerve, without ſurprize, the inſult of philoſophy, concurring with the diſappointment of the vulgar to haſten the downfall of Gentiliſm. But that downfall principally reſulted, not from the inſult of philoſophy, but from the general diſappointment of mankind. To quiet the conſcience, and to repreſs the fearful apprehenſion of puniſhment, by appeaſing the wrath of the Moral Judge of the world, had been the great principle of Gentile religion. It had failed to accompliſh this end, and would therefore tend to decline.

And to the bulk of mankind, ſtruggling under this alternative, either to ſeek ſome new and untried expedients of divine propitiation, or to continue their accuſtomed ſacrifices

crifices without hope, we may juſtly appropriate that exclamation of diſtreſs and perplexity, which the preaching of St. Peter extorted from his hearers, "Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?"

OF THE

PRINCIPLE OF RELIGION

UNDER

THE GOSPEL.

PART III.

SECTION I.

State of the Gentile and the Jew might naturally lead them reſpectively to the faith of Chriſt crucified—religious principle under the Goſpel oppoſite to that of Gentile religion, and more perfect than that of the patriarchal or Jewiſh—this the effect of the death of Chriſt—reflections upon the apoſtolical repreſentations of it.

GENTILE religion left mankind to continue their ſtruggle under that fear of a Divine Avenger, which has appeared the ruling principle of it.

The

The Covenant of Moſes, although it afforded clearer views of human indemnity, than the original promiſe conveyed, and thereby further reſtored the Love of God as an object, yet left a reſervation of puniſhment unremoved.

From theſe repreſentations of religion, when it had not as in the firſt inſtance, or when it had as in the ſecond, a Divine revelation for its ground, it ſeems that the Gentile and the Jew had both been conducted under the providence of God, the one by religious diſappointment, the other by divine promiſe, to a ſtate and diſpoſition of mind moſt likely to facilitate the impreſſion of the Goſpel upon them. The religious ſervice of the one had been a ſtruggle under guilty fear, which it had not allayed; that of the other tended to reſtore the influence of that perfect principle of Love towards God, on which religion proceeded in the time of primæval innocence, and on which it ever will proceed, as far as it correſponds

reſponds with the perfections of God and of man. To the one the Goſpel offered a certain remedy for an evil, ſtill raging in the worſt ſtate; to the other it preſented an accompliſhment of a cure, yet remaining imperfect.

Of providential deſign and conduct ſo much appears in thus preparing the world, partly by means of its very errors, partly by limited and incomplete revelations, for the reception of the Goſpel, that few unprejudiced minds will preſume, either that Chriſtianity is ſuſpicious becauſe it was ſeaſonable, or that any object would have been embraced ſo generally and devotedly, when ſuch had been the religious diſappointment of moſt men, and ſuch were the ſpiritual neceſſities of all, if it had not been ſo deſerving as to ſupply mankind with that which they wanted ſo much, but had ſought in vain, namely, a perfect ſacrifice for ſin.

It remains, then, to be ſhewn that torment-

ing and hopeleſs fear of the Divine Avenger for ſin, which had characterized the religion of the Gentile, is not the characteriſtical principle of the Goſpel, but love towards God, and in that perfection, which it had not reſumed either in the Patriarchal or Jewiſh religion.

It was the complaint of human nature, " my ſins have taken ſuch hold upon me, that I am not able to look up, yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart hath failed me." Such is the language of Jewiſh penitence; and it would, at leaſt, as properly and juſtly become the Gentile. But the downcaſt eye had encouragement to look up, and the failing heart to revive, at the Goſpel-call, " Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſins of the world!" The voice of conſcience would ceaſe to accuſe, and the view of the Divine Judge to terrify, when complete

plete propitiation appeared, and "the desire of all nations" was come.

In the apparent character of God, in the situation and prospects of mankind, and consequently in the principle of religion, the death of Christ accomplished that great revolution, which God, from the time of the promise to the completion, had been forwarding in many ways but with one design. And as temporary and particular redemption by animal sacrifices, as signs of the future great oblation, had been always obtained, under divine appointment, by means of death; so also eternal and universal redemption through Christ accrued to sinners, by means of his death. In all of them, their effects, however unequal, turned on the same common circumstance, that is, on the shedding of blood. Of Christ's death it was the first and greatest object to obtain the indemnity of the world from penal evils; if it had others, and indeed it had many, they were secondary and subordinate. Thus, for in-

ſtance, his death is not repreſented in Scripture as merely occaſional and intended for the ſake of his reſurrection, whatever purpoſes that might anſwer. It is one thing to offer the ſacrifice of himſelf purpoſely to put away ſin; it is another to undergo death, only in order to evince a future life. For the firſt of theſe purpoſes he died; for the laſt, among others, he roſe again from the dead. The Scripture places his death in the light of a ſingle object, as a real condition of indemnity.

On view, then, of the light in which the Apoſtles of Chriſt repreſent the death of their Lord, it may be of ſome uſe to ſuggeſt the following conſiderations. In the mind of God the death of his Son ſtood as the great and the firſt object, to which, as to an archetype, all proviſional appointments were conformed in various degrees, and of which, as they were intended to be more nearly or remotely introductory to it, every one of them expreſſed with more or leſs preciſion the real and appointed

pointed character. What God had predetermined that the death of Chriſt ſhould be in itſelf, and in its effects, that he partly ſignified by intermediate appointments. Thus the ſacrifices of Abel, of the Patriarchs, of the Jews, were all, but none complete, tranſcripts from it. The ſacrifice of Chriſt was ever the ſole inducement with God to grant indemnity to ſinners; and under a view to that ſacrifice alone, ſacramental repreſentations of it, when made with faith in the promiſe, were eſtabliſhed for reconciliation. The true nature and effects of the death of Chriſt, whatever God had previouſly ordained them, would be characterized, in part, in the nature and effects of the ſubſequent repreſentations. The Promiſe, the Prophecy, and the Sacrifice as a ſacramental repreſentation of the Great Sacrifice, ſubſiſted together, illuſtrating and confirming, and in part verifying each other, and contributing jointly to form the ground of that faith, without which external obſervances of any kind had no weight

or value before God. The ſacrifice of Chriſt ſtands in a light original and excluſively its own, but all other ſacrifices, of divine authority, in a light derived and ſecondary, and were real only ſo far, as their reſemblance of his ſacrifice could extend.

Hence, even if the Scriptures were ſilent on this point, which, however, appears not to be the caſe, it would ſeem reaſonable in the Apoſtles, to explain a ſacrificial appointment of God, ſuch as the death of Chriſt was, from the ſacrificial appointments which God, with the death of his Son ſtill firſt in his mind and determination, authorized or eſtabliſhed. The ſacrificial terms of the Scriptures were adopted in relation to the death of Chriſt, as characterizing that ſacrifice with preciſion and accuracy, but no other.

It ſeems, then, that the ſacrificial expreſſions, uſed by the Apoſtles, were applied to the death of Chriſt, not becauſe they were made familiar to the Jews by former application to the

the ſin-offerings of the law, but rather, becauſe their propriety to denote the ſacrifice of Chriſt had been the very reaſon of their application to the legal ſacrifices for ſin. In a word, there never was but one great object, which the known ſacrificial terms of Scripture ſtrictly and properly denoted, and to that object, accordingly, the Apoſtles apply them, in the manner they would have done, if there had been no patriarchal or legal ſacrifices to repreſent it.

SECTION II.

Scriptural views of the death of Chriſt—a judicial appointment of God—Chriſt taſted death for every man—his death an expiatory ſin-offering—men reconciled to God thereby—general reflection—

TO ſhew that the Chriſtian diſpenſation provides that deliverance from fear of the Divine Avenger for ſin, which the Gentile had ſought ſo long but in vain, and by

obliterating that reſervation of puniſhment which the covenant of Moſes had not taken away, reſtores completely that principle of love towards God, on which religion proceeded at firſt, and on which it will proceed, whenever it is perfect and true, the Scriptural views of the death of Chriſt and its effects may be briefly reduced to the ſubſequent particulars.

I. It was a judicial appointment of God, "that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus." Of mercy it would have been no violation, if he had arbitrarily remitted the puniſhment of ſins paſt; but Divine Righteouſneſs diſallowed this impunity. That God "might be juſt," he did not, as he declared he would not, make the wicked innocent, or treat the guilty as if they had been guiltleſs; but that he might nevertheleſs be "the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus," by his decree Chriſt "bare our ſins in his own body on the tree." Thus the ſcheme of human Redemption by the

the death of the Son of God diſplayed the penal as well as the merciful principle, without obſtruction of the one by the other. Accordingly Chriſt is ſaid to have "ſuffered for ſin," and to have "died unto ſin;" and the language of the Apoſtle to the Romans, when cleared from one obſcurity which the common verſion leaves upon it, ſufficiently indicates in what ſenſe; "God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and as a ſin-offering, condemned ſin in the fleſh." As a particular diſſertation follows reſpecting the purpoſe of God in the miſſion of his Son, no more will be added here than that the agony of Chriſt, when all his views and circumſtances are conſidered, ſeems explicable only upon this principle, that he then lay under that power of darkneſs, to which ſinners would otherwiſe have been judicially delivered. He felt no remorſe, for he knew no ſin; he did not ſink under apprehenſion of ſufferings, for love of mankind, fortitude, and foreknowledge of his certain triumph and reward, were all then in him at the greateſt;

greateſt; nor ſeems his agony of immediately divine infliction, for an angel came to ſtrengthen him. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me" was his own prophetical repreſentation of the conflict and the victory.

II. He taſted death for every man. All the ſufferings in his life and his death, were penal inflictions upon human nature, in conſequence of the fall; and to them, as ſuch, that is, becauſe they had been appointed as puniſhments, he ſubmitted, that they, who had incurred them, might yet be reſcued from them, and "that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death." A ſubmiſſion made to evils, really penal, and a victory over them obtained by one in all reſpects ſuch as Chriſt was, has juſtified God in vouchſafing pardon and eternal life to the guilty; to his Juſtice and his Mercy, both of which are undoubted perfections and cannot intrench upon each other, it has given what reſpectively belonged to them,

them, and made the righteouſneſs of God and the peace of men to kiſs each other. His blood was that neceſſary price and ranſom, by which redemption, even forgiveneſs of ſin, with all its conſequences, was obtained for man.

III. His death was an expiatory ſin-offering. This was true, without any reſerve, of that ſacrifice, but of no other. In that alone, the character of an atoning oblation was completed. Perfect moral worth in the victim, ſubmiſſion to penal ſufferings to which the guilty had been condemned, that ſubmiſſion intirely voluntary, conſent thereto given in circumſtances abſolutely excluſive of all deception in him who accepted it, and of weakneſs in him who gave it, ſeem to accompliſh the character of a piacular ſacrifice, and never were found even ſingle, and much leſs united, in any oblation, but that which Chriſt made of himſelf.

IV. We are reconciled to God by the death of

of his Son. This was the end of the promiſe. Since a judicial condemnation of ſin lay on the fleſh of Chriſt, that is, was exerciſed in his death; and ſince death, penally inflicted upon men, was by Chriſt, without ill-deſert of his own, "taſted for every man;" and ſince that death, as a perfect ſacrifice, hath put away ſin, the juſtice of God has not in man that object which it had, and the mercy of God may have in him that object which it had not. Hence at the very time when Jeſus taught his diſciples that "it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer," he added as the reſult, that "remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his name unto all nations." And under the continual ſupport of a divine miraculous power from him in the execution of that commiſſion, the Apoſtles aſſerted the Redemption obtained by his blood. They ſtile it "the common ſalvation," and propoſe it with equal cogency to the Gentile and the Jew, with evidences ſo accommodated to each of them, as to be fairly concluſive with both.

Theſe

Theſe are very ſhort and general outlines, but ſeem to afford a ſufficient view of the divine proviſion for delivering the Gentile from that fear of penal ſuffering for ſin, which had oppreſſed him ſo long and ſo grievouſly, and for effacing that reſervation of puniſhment, which the law of the Jew had ſtill left in force. Here one remedy was offered for the neceſſities of both; and the former had been conducted by religious perplexities and diſappointments, the other by a divine diſpenſation avowedly imperfect, to a ſtate of mind moſt likely to incline the one to truſt in "the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world," the other to believe that "all the promiſes of God in him are yea, and in him Amen." The principles of both, if properly purſued, would end in bringing them to Chriſt.

SECTION

SECTION III.

View of the divine character under the Goſpel—change in the circumſtances and views of man—revolution in the principle of religion—

THE character of God is obviouſly placed by the Goſpel in a light oppoſite to that, under which nature, upon the fall, beheld it. As a Saviour, he has removed that terror in which he actually appeared, as a Judge; and has removed it upon a conſideration, that, conſiſtently with his righteouſneſs, afforded a free exerciſe of his mercy. His creatures he never irrevocably abandoned to that evil which they had deſervedly incurred; but ſelected and preſerved, from the fall to the appointed "fullneſs of time," ſufficient witneſſes of his promiſe of human redemption; and in the mean while, if he left the bulk of human kind to the juſt apprehenſions of his judicial vengeance for ſin, it was only that he might diſpoſe them the more favourably

ably to his purpoſed covenant of mercy. By one part of his providential oeconomy he has recommended his ſalvation to them that were afar off, by another to them that were nigh, and has reconciled both to himſelf in one body by the croſs of Chriſt. In conſequence then, of the covenant, of which the blood of Chriſt is the ſeal, God, as its author, characteriſtically appears to the mind of man that amiable Being, and "abundant in goodneſs," which he had deſcribed himſelf. In ſuch a light the Jews might view him, but by faith and only in part; but guilt without promiſe of indemnity, which was the caſe of the Gentile, beheld him in oppoſite colours.

In the circumſtances of man alſo the change is ſo complete in all reſpects, that the Apoſtolical writers commonly repreſent redemption and creation by the ſame forms of language. He has no further reaſon to dread puniſhment for ſins paſt, for repentance with faith in the blood of the Redeemer is now reckoned unto him for righteouſneſs. He has

ſeen

ſeen mercy rejoicing againſt judgement in his behalf; and is not conſtrained to fly, like the guilty and fearful Gentile, from one diſappointed effort of divine propitiation to another, or to ſubmit, like the Jew, to ceremonial obſervances, exceſſive in number and limited in effect. He may "ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt has made us free," and rely on him for that indemnity he ſought ſo long.

In the principle of religion alſo, as in the character of God and the circumſtances of man, a ſtriking revolution has taken place. The leading purpoſe of divine worſhip is no longer deprecation, for ſin is departed from the door, and with it, fear of the divine avenger, its inſeparable attendant, has retired. It is caſt out at length from all influence and power as a principle of religion; "for we have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father," that is, as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks in another place, we have received not "the ſpirit of fear,

fear, but the ſpirit—of love." Nor will fear of God, in the ſenſe under which it has been here conſidered, ever reſume the ſtation and effect it has loſt, unleſs ſin be recalled to diſſolve that covenant of reconciliation, which the death of Chriſt has eſtabliſhed between God and mankind. "If we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation which ſhall devour the adverſaries."

In the view of the divine character, and in the circumſtances of man, and in the principle of religion, ſuch is the effect of univerſal remiſſion of ſins. This no religious ſcheme, of whatever date or credit, but the Goſpel, has provided; and the want of this, according to all appearances, nature could at no time ſupport.

SECTION IV.

Religious principle perfected under the Goſpel by means ſimilar to thoſe which God had authorized upon the Fall — By faith in a divine Promiſe — as that Promiſe exceeds any previous Promiſe, proportionably the religious principle more perfect than before — By an external expreſſion of faith in the Promiſe, viz. a ſacramental ſign of Chriſt's death — eſtimate of the religious principles under the ſeveral ſtates of Religion here conſidered.

BUT under the Goſpel, the caſe is capable of a much ſtronger repreſentation. For if this indemnity of ſinners has a real effect in removing that fear of God, which the conſciouſneſs of ſin had left in force either partly as in the caſe of the Jew, or totally as in that of the Gentile, how much more effectually muſt love towards God be reeſtabliſhed by promiſes, infinitely more "exceeding great and precious" than nature ever before received? If reconciliation to ſinners, ſufficient

cient as it is ſingly to teſtify that the Lord, according to his own proclamation, was merciful, gracious, and forgiving, had alone filled up the whole meaſure of divine goodneſs to mankind, even then it would have appeared great; but how much greater it ſhews in their adoption to a joint-inheritance with Chriſt?

The Divine Being now beholds them in cloſe connection with the Son of his love, who by the moſt intimate and dear conjunction and intereſt with him, is able, and by the neareſt relation to and affection for man is inclined, to ſave them to the uttermoſt that come unto God by him, not merely as the Miniſter, but as the Author of their ſalvation. "If ye aſk, ſaith he, any thing in my name, I will do it." The pardon of our ſins, ſpiritual helps, a right direction of our will and action, and "whatever things pertain to life and godlineſs," are all included in the Promiſe.

Upon comparing, then, the Regenerate and the Fallen ſtates of nature together, we ſhall find that Divine Revelation has laid the ſame foundation of Faith, and employed ſimilar ſigns in the one as in the other, with that difference only of effect, which ſuited the circumſtances of man at the time.

I. The foundation of Faith now laid is, as before, a Divine Promiſe; of which the ſubſtance is, that Chriſt will reſtore all believers in him to a ſecond life, if they are dead, becauſe he is the reſurrection; and will give them, whether living or dead, eternal life, becauſe he is the life. It was delivered with a perſpicuity, that was proper, when no ſucceeding prophecies were intended to throw occaſional illuſtration upon it. Thus Penitence is now conducted as high as Innocence could poſſibly have aſpired; and Faith in the divine Promiſe is, as before, the principal condition of the bleſſing.

On

On the difference of the promiſes, then, will depend the difference of the principles, on which they ground religion. The Promiſe of deliverance from penal evil has no other immediate tendency, but that of abating the fear of the Divine Judge, by a reſtoration of love towards him, but imperfect; but the promiſe of eternal life, and of all things neceſſary, either to facilitate our attainment of it, or to complete our felicity in it, tends as immediately to reinſtate the perfect principle of religion, that is, to reeſtabliſh love towards God as our Father, without any fear of him as our Judge.

II. Of Faith in the Divine Promiſe the external expreſſion alſo, at preſent appointed, is ſimilar to that, which God accepted before. To the communicant Bread and Wine are the Body and Blood of the Redeemer after his coming, in the ſame ſenſe as, before his coming, ſacrificial blood had been to the offerer. In each of the two periods, the viſible

ſible ſigns that ſhewed his death, had on that account a real and ſacramental virtue. At the firſt and at the laſt God authorized a ſtanding repreſentation of the univerſal ſacrifice, only with that difference of effect which reſpectively ſuited the fallen and reſtored ſtates of nature, and the opening and accompliſhment of his ſcheme of redemption. Faith in the Promiſe of a future Deliverer, and the accepted ſacrifice, as a ſacramental ſign of the future effuſion of his blood, were both of them to the penitent real means of juſtification; Faith in the ſacrifice which that Redeemer has offered, and in the Promiſe of eternal life which he has given, and the Communion of his body and blood, which he has appointed as a ſacramental ſign of his death, are alſo now real means of preſent grace and final glorification.

Uncertain as to the effect which the foregoing view of the principles of religion, in all

all the ſtates of it here conſidered, may have on the minds of others, I only aſſign, by way of concluſion, ſome of the impreſſions it leaves upon my own.

Only in the firſt and laſt of theſe ſtates, the criterion of perfection and truth is found ſingly. Only under human Innocence and under the Goſpel diſpenſation, religion upon earth proceeds on the ſame fundamental principle, and on the ſame endearing view of the Divine Being, upon which the religion of the bleſſed in heaven will proceed; and on that account ſtands with it on one footing of adjuſtment to the deſign and approbation of God, and to the original and final perfections of man.

An approach to this caſe, under the patriarchs and the law, carries a proper and characteriſtical evidence of a divine ſcheme, but proviſional only and introductory to one of greater perfection.

The

The religion of ſinners, when merely the diſciples of nature, reverſes the caſe, both in the principle, and in the view of the Divine Being, on which it proceeds.

The detection of the characteriſtical principle ſhews which is falſe, which is true but introductory, which is true and final.

THE PREMIAL AND JUDICIAL PRINCIPLES OF REDEMPTION CONSIDERED UNDER THE IDEA OF DIVINE RECTITUDE.

OF THE PREMIAL PRINCIPLE OF REDEMPTION.

PART I.

SECTION I.

Of divine Rectitude, as it appears from the Word of God.

SINCE the condemnation of ſin in the fleſh ſeems to be aſſigned by St. Paul as one of the divine purpoſes in the miſſion of Chriſt as a ſin-offering, many will think that God did not act in his work of Redemption without a penal or judicial principle.

But upon a ſuppoſition that a judicial motive to the miſſion of Chriſt may not be determinately

terminately attributed to God in Scripture, the Redemption of man has been conſidered as an included part of that reward, which the virtue and ſufferings of the Redeemer merited and received. And this principle, which may be termed Premial, has been preferred to the Judicial one, upon the idea that the former is conſiſtent, but the latter irreconcileable, with rectitude, or the rule of righteouſneſs and truth, on which all agree that God invariably proceeds.

How either the one or the other of theſe principles may be affected by Scriptural language reſpecting Redemption, is a queſtion upon which nothing will be here obſerved; the preſent intention is to enquire ſeparately whether we may certainly judge that the premial principle is agreeable, and the judicial one contrary, to divine rectitude, when applied as a teſt of both. It will depend on the reſult, whether we can venture upon that preſumption which the premial ſcheme implies; and whether the judicial purpoſe is,

or

or not, aſcribed to God upon ſufficient evidence.

From the Word and the Works of God, where they are clear and determinate, the true idea of divine rectitude muſt be drawn, whenever we venture to judge of the agreement or diſagreement of any proceeding with it. For ſince it is certain that rectitude will be preſerved inviolate in both, no philoſophical poſition of our own, if inconſiſtent with the known declaration and proceeding of God, can be applied juſtly to determine what, in a controverted caſe, he may have ſpoken or done.

I. In his Word, then, the denunciation occurs, "in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die." Accordingly as God is conſidered as moral, or ſimply as ſupreme, Governor, we muſt attribute this denunciation to moral rectitude or to mere will. The act of ſupreme will, independent of a moral character, cannot determine any thing

in

in a queſtion of rectitude, and therefore is out of the caſe. But conſidering God as regulating will by eſſential rectitude, we ſeem obliged to admit that the injunction of obedience, and the denunciation of death as the penalty of diſobedience, were both conſonant to moral right, and, if otherwiſe, that he would not have delivered the one, nor have denounced the other.

Between the penal denunciation, then, and the principle of rectitude it appears that no contradiction ſubſiſted. And upon delivery of that denunciation, the ground of divine rectitude is ſomewhat enlarged. A new queſtion will thence ariſe as to the degree and extent in which it may be right in God to fulfil that denunciation. He is "faithful and true, and cannot deny himſelf;" and, if ſo, another reaſon in rectitude may intervene, againſt the impunity of diſobedience.

Upon the actual entry of ſin into the world, what was, then, the operation of the Mercy and

and the Judgement of God? The ſcheme of Redemption then began to take effect; and it ſeems that the influence of rectitude upon both thoſe divine attributes, in that ſcheme, may in ſome degree be calculated from the proceeding of God upon human tranſgreſſion. In his treatment of the fallen offenders, the judicial and the merciful principle were both diſcernible, each in their appropriate point of view. And why, if it was conſiſtent with divine rectitude, that, when moral diſobedience enſued, the puniſhment denounced ſhould not follow? The ſcheme of redemption became neceſſary becauſe God had threatened and would puniſh, and yet would ſave.

From hence it can ſcarcely be preſumed conſiſtent with divine rectitude, to annul the puniſhment of diſobedience.

But it may be obſerved further, that the promiſe of redemption was followed by the infliction of puniſhment. And this particular circumſtance ſeems rather to imply that

divine mercy might not, in rectitude, overrule a real operation of divine judgement. At leaſt, the promiſe of redemption gives no authority to preſume that God had no judicial purpoſe in it, or that divine rectitude left the divine mercy at uncontrouled liberty to ſave ſinners without penal conſiderations. To prevent the fall, or to exclude the penal conſequences of it, might not have been irreconcileable with ſupreme will, acting on the ſingle motive of benevolence; but, apparently, the moral perfections of God, operating alſo on their own principle of rectitude, ſo adjuſted the ſcheme of redemption in all its parts, that it accompliſhed the purpoſes of divine benevolence to man, without infringing the rule of righteouſneſs, by treating ſinners as if they were ſinleſs, that is, without leaving them wholly unpuniſhed. Accommodated to the caſe is the language of God by his prophet, "Zion ſhall be redeemed with judgement, and her converts with righteouſneſs." Thus far, appearances ſeem not to warrant a preſumption, that

that the abſolute impunity of the guilty is conſiſtent with divine rectitude, and that God, in the miſſion of his Son as redeemer, had no judicial view to the condemnation of ſin in the fleſh.

Thus again, when God brought a flood of waters upon the earth, and thereby inflicted the heavieſt vengeance that ever yet has fallen upon a ſinful world, the new bleſſing on the ground, and on the poſterity of Noah, was in the divine intention. Purpoſes of the utmoſt benignity to the race of man were in reſerve, yet they were not accompliſhed in ſuch a way as to ſet aſide a proper puniſhment of ſin. There ſeems to be a principle, that regulates and meaſures divine benevolence to mankind; if it be rectitude, there is no appearance here, that the total impunity of ſinners is not contradictory to it.

Upon the interceſſion of Moſes, the Lord repented of the evil he thought to do unto his people, for the worſhip of the golden

calf. Yet the ſword of the children of Levi was drawn, by the judicial command of God, againſt brethren, companions, and friends. And although the Lord went ſo far in the exerciſe of mercy, as to ſend his angel before the people, ſtill ſome penal viſitation was kept in reſerve; "nevertheleſs, in the day when I viſit, I will viſit their ſin upon them." There are many inſtances, ſimilar to theſe, in the hiſtory of Iſrael. God ſpared them frequently, but left not their provocations wholly unpuniſhed.

Even in the caſe of Moſes himſelf, neither his high ſtand in the divine favour, nor his faithfulneſs, nor his earneſt prayer, prevented his penal excluſion from the promiſed land. And even ſins of ignorance had their appointed ſin-offering for atonement.

In every divine government, whether of Iſrael in particular, or of the world at large, rectitude will indiſputably rule; and that can ſcarcely be preſumed, in different adminiſtrations

niſtrations of the ſame divine governor, to preſcribe oppoſite principles. There ſeems to be no ſufficient authority for ſuppoſing it would exclude the abſolute impunity of the guilty in one divine ſcheme, and yet admit it in another.

SECTION II.

This conſtruction ſupported by the tenor of divine declaration—by appearances in the Works of God—reflection on the caſe of the objects of redemption.

TO ſupport this conſtruction of the few caſes referred to, every ſtrong declaration of God, in his Word, that ſinners ſhall not be "wholly unpuniſhed," would naturally tend. One among them, the only one that will be mentioned, is that proclamation made to the Mediator of the law, wherein the Lord expreſsly ſtyles himſelf "abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin," but

adds nevertheleſs, "and that will by no means clear the guilty." Diſpenſations of mercy and forgiveneſs, are the reſult of goodneſs; but are adjuſted to truth, by not confounding the caſes of guilt and innocence, and treating either of them in contradiction to the nature of the thing.

From this ſhort appeal to the Word of God we may obſerve, that inſtead of favouring the preſumption, that divine rectitude admits of the abſolute impunity of ſinners, it has rather tended to ſhew, that, whenever we venture to ſpeak of the merciful and the judicial attributes of God, as they may affect ſinners, we are not juſtified in ſuppoſing the exerciſe of the one without the other.

We may next enquire, whether the conſtruction here put upon the Word of God, is ſupported by actual and preſent appearances in his Works. The courſe of nature is a divine adminiſtration conducted upon principles of moral rectitude. By the law eſtabliſhed

bliſhed therein, the conſequences of ſin, as ſuch, are penal; and in its very nature, ſin has a tendency to the production even of greater puniſhment, than it receives at preſent. Thus, throughout the natural government of God, his judicial authority is ſeen in actual force, whether operating by a neceſſary relation of cauſe and effect, originally ſettled by himſelf, or by the inſtrumentality of civil ſanctions.

We may alſo take into our view the conſtitution of human nature, which is conſtructed upon ſimilar principles; ſo that the divine government of the world at large, and of individuals in particular, is conducted by the ſame rule of moral rectitude.

The penal effects of ſin are, accordingly, in ſome degree or other of them at leaſt, though not perhaps in full proportion to the offence, conſtant and inevitable; and no apparent proviſion is made, by the author of nature, to prevent them. If he had ſo conſtructed

the courſe of things, that repentance, that reformation, could in all caſes, or even in any, actually ſet aſide all the penal conſequences of ſin, there might appear ſome authority for ſuppoſing that the entire impunity of ſin was not irreconcileable with his moral rectitude; and we might perhaps be induced to argue, by analogy, from the conſtitution of nature to the ſcheme of redemption, as both are the plan of the ſame author, "with whom," morally as well as eſſentially, "is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning." But, on the contrary, if the relation eſtabliſhed between ſin and puniſhment, holds invariably, in ſome degree or other, throughout nature, there are no appearances to juſtify a preſumption, that in any divine ſcheme, a treatment of ſinners, in no reſpects penal, is reconcileable with divine rectitude. It might rather be preſumed from thoſe appearances, that the ends, which the rectitude of God had preſcribed to his natural and moral government of mankind, made it neceſſary, that ſinners ſhould not be "wholly unpuniſhed."

It

It ſeems, then, that neither the Word nor the Works of God imply that the abſolute impunity of ſin infers no violation of divine rectitude. Neither a purpoſe of mercy, nor even the promiſe of redemption, have been found to exclude a proper puniſhment, where the nature and truth of the caſe of ſinners required it.

It appears then to remain entirely dependant upon the real ſtate of thoſe who were the intended objects of redemption, whether the judicial attribute of God ſhould, conformably to what we know of divine rectitude, have any or no operation.

We are, then, in the next place, to obſerve the nature of that caſe, which the divine ſcheme of redemption affected. It is plainly that of penitence; yet not ſo much in reſpect of that part in the character, which, after reformation, became virtuous, as of that, which, before converſion, was vicious. For if in the accompliſhment of redemption mercy

cy be ſaid to rejoice againſt judgement, we may expect to find in the redeemed proper objects of both. The matter, then, may be reſted upon the light in which the conſciences of penitents repreſent their characters to themſelves. On the paſt they look now with ſorrow and with ſhame; for guilt alone preſents itſelf there: and as the eye of God attends them in the retroſpect, his view diſcerns even more of their guilt, than meets their own. With relation to this part of their character, they were, in the language of Scripture, as well as in their own conſcious eſtimation, "the children of wrath, even as others." And every real penitent knows and feels the caſe to be capable of greater ſtrength. Even in his regenerate ſtate, how greatly does moral demerit overballance his moral worth? In fact, then, penitence is not the ſame, nor equivalent, with innocence; it implies a mixture of guilt precontracted, and puniſhment proportionably deſerved.

A divine diſpenſation, ſtrictly moral and righteous,

righteous, will be adjuſted, in all its parts, to the whole truth of the fact, and not incur an infringement of rectitude, by treating oppoſite caſes in a way contrary to their real deſert. How far the worthy part in the character of penitence may go, in mitigation of thoſe penal conſequences which the unworthy part of it merits, is not the enquiry: the queſtion depends upon the abſolute impunity of ſo much real guilt, as conſtituted the very caſe that redemption was intended to reach. If it be agreeable to divine rectitude, that the penitent ſhould be treated according to what he is, in whatever degree he is actually a ſinner, in that very degree he is excluded from the preſumption of impunity. If, in fact, the impunity of ſinners had been conſiſtent with rectitude, much of the need of redemption diſappears. For it could not be neceſſary to the removal of puniſhment, if it had been right, that none ſhould be inflicted.

SECTION

SECTION III.

Concluſion from foregoing appearances — objection thence ariſing to the premial ſcheme — view of conſiderations prepared to obviate this objection.

TO place the point under conſideration diſtinctly in view, it may, then, be expedient to aſſign the preciſe ground, upon which it ſtands. It appears not, from the Word of God, that the promiſe of redemption, or any aſſignable purpoſe or declaration of mercy, overrule the proper operation of a judicial principle in the divine conduct towards ſinners: and, in the conſtitution of nature, which is the Work of God, the effect of that principle, upon every caſe of ſin, is obſerved to be, not occaſional and precarious, but conſtant and neceſſary. Judging, then, according to appearances, we can hardly venture to preſume that the abſolute impunity of ſinners is not repugnant to that rectitude, upon which the Word and the Works of the divine moral governor proceed.

which

On examination we find alſo, that the very caſe, upon which the neceſſity of redemption depends, was, in fact, a caſe of ſin; which, if it was attended with impunity, received a treatment, the conſiſtency of which, with the nature of the thing, and the apparent righteouſneſs of the divine government, is not aſcertained.

The objection, then, hence ariſing to the premial ſcheme of redemption, may be thus repreſented. Actual guilt, there admitted in the objects of redemption, reduces them to that very caſe, which rectitude, as it ſeems exemplified in the Word and Works of God, excludes from the impunity preſumed: and it implies in them ſuch real circumſtances, that, if the divine proceeding was not contradictory to them, would infer a judicial treatment. The premial ſcheme might ſtand upon a footing of agreement with rectitude, if the puniſhment of ſin had therein an aſſignable place, or object: but as it repre-

ſents

ſents it to fall no where, and founds atonement on the moral worth only of Chriſt, the impunity of guilt ſeems to follow from the premiſes therein laid down, in apparent contradiction to that principle of rectitude, on which the ſcheme is maintained.

This objection was foreſeen at the time of propoſing the premial ſcheme; and by way of obviating it, one conſideration urged is, that "whatever puniſhment the caſe of the ſinner might require, the merits of the redeemer muſt require an immenſe reward." Here the puniſhment, required by the caſe of the ſinner, (that is, by rectitude, which is ſaid to imply ſuch a treatment, as is ſuited to the nature of the thing) is ſuppoſed to be outweighed by the rectitude of aſſigning the redeemer a reward, as great, as his merits required. But this ſeems to fall ſhort of the point: the proper queſtion would be, whether, if rectitude diſallowed the impunity of ſinners, the two divine parties, acting on the ſame will and the ſame principle of rectitude

in

in the ſcheme of redemption, may be juſtly preſumed, the one of them to have aſſigned, the other to have choſen, a reward, which involved in it that impunity of guilt? If this may not be preſumed, the greatneſs of the reward merited by the redeemer will not outweigh the rectitude of treating the guilty penally.

Another conſideration, alſo, that the bleſſings of redemption are not granted directly to ſinners on their own account, but accrue to them indirectly, as firſt conferred on Chriſt, ſeems inſufficient to remove the difficulty. For the true enquiry here would be, whether the bleſſings of redemption would be extended to ſinners by any way of intervention whatſoever, that inferred their impunity, if rectitude required their penal treatment? If not, the objection continues as valid againſt the indirect method of conveyance, as againſt the other.

Nor ſeems the objection ſufficiently obviated

viated by a diſtinction made between the truth and the whole truth of the complicated caſe of penitents, or by imputing that conduct to God, which, upon compariſon of all circumſtances, in ſome reſpects is fit, in others unfit. For the queſtion relates only to that particular kind of fitneſs or unfitneſs, which is implied in the notion of agreement or diſagreement with divine rectitude; and when the proceeding, attributed to God in any caſe, ſeems to violate all or any of the known principles of truth and righteouſneſs, as they are exemplified in his Word and Works, the reaſon is plain for not acceding to the application.

From the turn and reach of the conſiderations, prepared to meet this objection, it appears ſtill, that the principle of divine rectitude, when applied to the doctrine of redemption, does not conclude in favour of the premial ſcheme, but rather of the opinion, that God acted in the miſſion of his Son upon a judicial purpoſe of condemning ſin in the fleſh. Upon

Upon the whole; a Providence without Juſtice ſeems to be no article in the belief of nature; and from that Juſtice it appears difficult to detach that particular branch of it, which directly relates to ſinners, as objects of puniſhment; and even more difficult, to conceive that very part of it to be occaſional only, and exemplified in the introductory diſpenſations of God, but dormant and indifferent in the laſt and the greateſt. And if, agreeably to divine rectitude, judgement had "paſſed upon all men to condemnation," and yet Redemption, even although it "concluded all under ſin," proceeded, excluſively of a judicial purpoſe, on premial views to the Redeemer; then apparently, ſupreme will conferred impunity upon objects, ſtill in that very ſtate and condition, wherein divine rectitude had previouſly decreed their puniſhment. If the whole character of God could be reſolved into ſimple abſolute benevolence, ſo much might perhaps be expected to flow from it; but if rectitude be

the meaſure and rule of it, the free-gift of the former can hardly be preſumed to annul the effect of the latter—it might rather be preſumed, that the ſcheme of Redemption would carry a relation to ſinners, in one way as objects of mercy, in another as objects of puniſhment, that God "might be juſt, and yet the juſtifier of him that believeth" in the Redeemer.

OF THE

JUDICIAL PRINCIPLE

OF

REDEMPTION.

PART II.

SECTION I.

The Judicial purpoſe—view of objections to it—innocence and puniſhment in what ſenſe not inconſiſtent—Scriptural inſtances—general inferences.

AS appearances in the Word and Works of God ſeem to give no encouragement to preſume that the premial principle is conſiſtent with divine rectitude, it is poſſible alſo that they may not authorize a preſumption that the judicial principle has any contradiction to it.

To proceed then with the counterpart of the preceding reflections—

A ſcheme of redemption, if, agreeably to divine rectitude, it will moſt probably reſpect ſinners judicially, muſt yet, under the form of an act of grace, imply ſome proviſion made for their deliverance from puniſhment.

Suppoſing then that the Scriptures declare, what many underſtand from them, that God adjuſted redemption to the ends of benevolence to mankind, by ſending his Son to redeem ſinners from the curſe of the law, and to the rule of rectitude, by appointing him to bear, "their ſins in his own body on the tree," the preſent enquiry will be, whether the death of the Son of God, or the ſin-offering of his human nature, was irreconcileable with divine rectitude, if a judicial purpoſe weighed with God in the appointment of it, and gave it any penal relation to ſin.

And to this end we may take a view of objections that are made to the judicial principle

ciple, under the idea of ſubſtituting the premial one in its place.

One objection is, that "innocence and puniſhment are inconſiſtent and incompatible ideas." This is adopted language, and ſeems to confound ideas that are diſtinct. The innocence of Chriſt was his own; the puniſhment was not his own. But the objection ſuppoſes the innocence and the puniſhment to have the ſame perſonal relation to Chriſt; if they had, there muſt be an inconſiſtence, if they had not, there may be none. It may then be doubted whether the objection, as it ſtands, really reaches the caſe of Chriſt. The puniſhment of innocence, as ſuch, would indeed involve a moral contradiction; but it is not ſaid that God condemned innocence in the fleſh. The only ſenſe, then, in which the objection is applicable to the judicial principle, ſeems to be this; that the innocence of Chriſt, and his ſubjection to that

puniſhment which ſinners, and not he, had deſerved, are inconſiſtent and incompatible ideas.

To judge of this objection, it will be requiſite for us to obſerve in what light the denunciations and proceedings of God, in his Word, place it. The caſes produced ſhall be few—

For the wickedneſs of Sodom and its dependant cities, God reſolved to deſtroy the inhabitants. Of children, then, that is of real innocents, how great a portion periſhed in the common puniſhment of the public profligacy?

Pharaoh and his people had deſtroyed the Iſraelitiſh children; God, by a penal retaliation, deſtroyed the firſt-born of the Egyptians. The puniſhment of thoſe, who had committed the offence, fell upon parties that had committed none.

The children of murmuring Iſrael were doomed to wander in the wilderneſs forty years,

years, and to bear the whoredoms of their fathers. The parties here ſubjected to real puniſhment, were innocent of the ſin, which they were to bear. And in whatever degree the children would actually bear the ſin of their progenitors, in that degree they would ſuffer penally for ill-deſert, which was not their own.

In the rebellion of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, wives, ſons, daughters, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit with them.

If any Iſraelitiſh city committed idolatry, the nation was ordered to deſtroy the place, and every creature in it.

It was the command of God, "go and ſmite Amalek, and ſpare them not, but ſlay infant and ſuckling." The caſe was nearly the ſame with reſpect to all the nations of Canaan. The ill deſert, in the three preceding inſtances, had not been ſo univerſal as the puniſhment.

Again—Famine raged in Iſrael in the days of David three years, year after year—for Saul

and his bloody houſe, becauſe he ſlew the Gibeonites. Thirty years and upwards after the crime, the judicial infliction came; of courſe, many were likely to ſuffer grievouſly in the calamity, who had been far from a condition to take a ſhare in contracting the guilt. The puniſhment, to which they were ſubjected, had no aſſignable foundation in miſconduct of their own. From the context it appears alſo, that an atonement, made by the death of ſeven of the houſe of Saul, prevailed with God to remove the national calamity. The change of the perſons as to the puniſhment, was not grounded upon any communication of the guilt.

When the Angel ſmote the people with peſtilence, David ſaw him, and ſaid, "Lo! I have ſinned; but theſe ſheep, what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, be againſt me."—Iſrael and Judah were innocent of that crime, which the miniſter of the divine infliction puniſhed; and the king felt and owned

owned that the vengeance was only deſerved by himſelf.

The provocations of Manaſſeh were alſo puniſhed in Judah, at a time when the true religion was publickly reſtored by a righteous king. The guilt of blood ſhed in all the land, and of idolatrous corruptions introduced therein, was perſonal in Manaſſeh; yet, "for that which he did in Jeruſalem," the Lord removed Judah out of his ſight, and the divine vengeance began to operate in the reign of Joſiah. The conſtruction of Eſdras on the caſe is this;—"As for the things that came to paſs in his time, they were written in former times, concerning thoſe that ſinned; ſo that the words of the Lord roſe up againſt Iſrael."

In moſt of theſe caſes, the very expreſſions, in which they are delivered, ſeem neceſſarily to imply, that the cauſe of the judicial inflictions upon the ſeveral ſufferers lay not in their

their own demerit. An imitation of the ill conduct of others cannot be aſſigned as the cauſe of it, ſince that would contradict the terms; for that imitation would be a ſin of their own, and would make the puniſhment their own alſo; but they are repreſented expreſsly as bearing the iniquities of others.

Theſe and other ſimilar inſtances exemplify the declarations of God, that he would viſit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation; and the preſent ſtate of Iſrael, conſidered in all circumſtances, is alſo a ſtanding example of judicial infliction upon the children for the iniquity of their fathers.

Every man, even in prudence, but much more in duty, will be extremely cautious, both of the manner in which he makes up his mind, and of the language in which he hazards an opinion, upon Scriptural caſes. After viewing theſe inſtances in every light, in which it was in my power to place them,

they

they appear directly applicable to the objection. They ſeem to exemplify real puniſhment laid upon perſons free from that ill-deſert, which in moſt of the caſes, was expreſsly aſſigned as the ground of the penal infliction. From them, then, the objection apparently receives no confirmation; and adjuſting our ideas to the beſt authority poſſible, we ſeem obliged to conſider it as notified by actual fact in the government of God, that in certain caſes, and for certain reaſons, it may be conſiſtent with divine rectitude, that the puniſhment of ill-deſert in ſome, ſhould be laid upon others, without any relation therein had to conduct of their own.

It ſeems not impoſſible to throw a ſufficient light upon the queſtion of divine rectitude in ſuch proceedings.

It may be ſaid that the rectitude of the divine conduct of every caſt, and to every man, depends partly on the exceptions, unknown to us, which God may make, in favour of

of perſonal worth in him, who bears the puniſhment of others. Whoever, lying under a judicial calamity for ill-deſert not his own, is yet perſonally dutiful and obedient to God, in his power it is to reward him perſonally, in the midſt of vengeance. Thus Joſiah, by an eſpecial favour, was gathered unto his fathers in peace, and by a timely departure delivered from the evil to come. The phraſe, "gathered to his fathers in peace," directly conducts our thoughts to a future life of peaceful retribution; and of every one, in ſimilar circumſtances, Iſaiah prophecies, "he ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs."

Upon this, then, the great and moſt material conſideration is founded. The whole, and not a part only, of the government of God is requiſite to complete the ground upon which the rectitude of his meaſures may be certainly determined. If ſufferings may

may work, in another life, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" for thoſe on whom they are laid in this, there ſeems a juſt preſumption againſt repreſenting them as wrongly or injuriouſly inflicted, even though they are laid upon innocence, even though they are in a penal conſideration for the ſin of others, even though they are inflicted by the act of divine will and power, independently of conſent in the ſufferer. For, upon this idea, they may eaſily ſeem, under any circumſtances, the means of kindneſs, adjuſted to an end of greater kindneſs.

The particular interdiction of the law (that the fathers ſhould not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers) will not authorize any exception here. The reaſon is obvious; after men have killed, there is no more that they can do; they would certainly injure, becauſe of the impoſſibility that they ſhould recompence hereafter. God may juſtify himſelf, "I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal."

It

It appears, then, that innocence and puniſhment may be ſaid conſiſtently to coincide in all caſes, wherein God ſubjects ſome to judicial ſufferings, merited by the ſins of others, but not incurred by ill-deſert of their own; and as this is not without example in the divine conduct, there ſeems no ground to repreſent the proceeding as impoſſible or wrong; or to preſume it unjuſt, ſince that very ſuffering, inflicted penally on account of others, may be working, in the progreſs and reſult of the divine government, ſuch an overballance of good to the ſufferer himſelf, that if his view, like that of God, could but connect the means and the end, he would not unthankfully accuſe the hand that laid thoſe ſufferings upon him, nor weakly decline the bleſſing reſerved for them that endure. Thus, the belief of a better reſurrection is aſſigned by St. Paul, as the reaſon that weighed with many to ſuffer without "accepting deliverance." Indeed, to give this conſideration the utmoſt poſſible weight, it

it would be neceſſary that the recompence, accruing in another life, had been actually ſet before the ſufferers in this. But ſtill, though not in their view, it might be in the mind and eye of God; and if ſo, his conduct toward them would be no injuſtice or wrong.

SECTION II.

Of Chriſt's conſent, as to the ground and extent of it — the objection thereto, drawn from caſes of injurious conſent, conſidered.

THE full effect of all that has been hitherto obſerved may be applied to Chriſt with a great addition of ſtrength, under the principle of his conſent. It will be neceſſary, then, to illuſtrate that principle in the extent to which it goes, that we may the better calculate the force of an objection made indeed on general grounds, but, if capable of any particular application to the conſent of Chriſt, ſufficient to prevent it from carrying

carrying any concluſive weight in the matter under conſideration.

It is aſked—Suppoſing the conſent of the innocent to be treated as criminals, how can they be injured? This ſeems the ſubſtance of the objection; and with reſpect thereto we may obſerve, that, if the innocent are treated as criminals, that is, if Chriſt "ſuffered as really for our iniquities as if they had been his own," (which if it be allowed he did, then he ſuffered penally) ſtill, from what has been ſaid already, and what will immediately follow, there appears no authority for preſuming an injury done. Whether the principle of conſent in Chriſt, may not involve circumſtances in itſelf, ſufficient to remove all exceptions, will be here the proper enquiry.

The ground on which it ſtands, is not only extremely wide, but alſo excluſively appropriated. He concerted in heaven that plan of redemp-

redemption, which he afterwards conducted on earth. The method and order to be purſued in the accompliſhment of it, all the introductory means, all the intermediate and final parts of the ſcheme, were adjuſted by his own counſel concurring with that of the Father, with whom, by unity of will and of love to mankind, he was a principal to his own appointment as Redeemer. When he had taken upon himſelf the "likeneſs of ſinful fleſh," it was God that was in Chriſt. All the glories of the divine Spirit were ſignally diſplayed in him, both in what he promiſed as Son of God, and what he predicted as a prophet, with the moſt minute particularity as to circumſtances, and the moſt exact limitation as to time, and in his original diſpoſition and arrangement of things in his work of redemption, all implying a perfect inſight into the divine mind; in one word, in him "were hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowlege." If theſe circumſtances are carried through every relation and reach

to which they will go, we may perhaps think it unſafe to ſay that any poſſibilities that conſent may be founded in weakneſs, or in exceſs of generoſity by which any one may fall ſhort of that meaſure of regard due to himſelf, as the brave Decii did, can ſuggeſt any ſuſpicion here, that injurious advantage was given on one ſide, and taken on the other, when conſent was circumſtanced like this. We may rather preſume that this is an incomparable caſe; and that no analogy, no argument will hold from the accidents of ordinary conſent among men "deceiving and being deceived," to that, which reſulted from the exerciſe of the divine perfection of the Son of God in the boſom of the Father. Whatever he was to do when made fleſh, or to endure, and for what purpoſes and to what effect, having been arranged and ſanctioned by the Spirit of the Father and his own, it was the ſame wiſdom, it was the ſame will, by which he acted in the form of

God,

God, and conſented in the likeneſs of Man. It appears extremely difficult to conceive upon what ground conſent, ſo qualified, ſhould fall ſhort of evincing, that, whatever the ſufferings and the purpoſes of undergoing them were, no injury was done or received, nor rectitude infringed. It ſeems rather to imply that the condemnation of "ſin in the fleſh," that is, a judicial purpoſe of God in the miſſion of his Son was unexceptionably adjuſted to the intereſt of all parties, and to every rule of right.

But to ſhew further that the conſent of Chriſt to undergo a judicial condemnation of ſin in his fleſh might not be contradictory to rectitude or injurious to himſelf, there is another light, in which the caſe may be repreſented. The "likeneſs of ſinful fleſh," (which the Apoſtles repreſent, as a neceſſary requiſite to the ſin-offering) was raiſed into being by the immediate agency of God him-

ſelf, as the inſtrument of his work, that death might be taſted for every man. Of an inſtrument, purpoſely prepared by the Divine Author of Redemption, the diſpoſal and application, of right, are his. It appears hardly to be preſumed, that the rectitude of this application depends wholly, or even principally, on the nature and quality of the uſes, to which it might be applied. One would rather preſume, that in a ſubſervience to that ſpecial purpoſe, for which it was prepared by an operation extraordinary and miraculous, the duty and obedience of that fleſh lay. "For this cauſe came I to this hour," is the language of the Redeemer; and whatever implies duty, implies the rectitude of preſcribing it, and ſeems, in this particular caſe, to exclude exceptions either to the right of appointing him, or to his own obedience in conſenting, to bear "our ſins in his own body on the tree." Eſpecially if it be remembered, that the appointed ſufferings of Chriſt, whether they had, or had not, any judi-

judicial reſpect and relation to human ſins, as the cauſe of them, were, in either caſe, exactly the ſame. For then, the matter will appear in this light; God, by an extraordinary agency prepared for himſelf his own inſtrument of ſinleſs fleſh, that therein "through death, he might deſtroy him that had the power of death". Accordingly, God in Chriſt applied that voluntary inſtrument to the purpoſe appointed, and delivered it unto death, thereby "reconciling the world unto himſelf." Now, even upon the premial ſcheme of Redemption this whole proceeding would ſtand clear of any infringement of rectitude; for the innocence of Chriſt ſeems not to cancel a real right in God of diſpoſal, ſo founded and ſo exerciſed. And if Chriſt in his fleſh was, notwithſtanding his innocence, ordained and given to ſuffer and to die for us without ſuppoſing injurious advantage made of his conſent: there ſeems no occaſion to ſuppoſe it, though the ſame ſufferings were inflicted upon a penal

conſideration of the ſin of others as the cauſe of them. In the actual ſufferings, if any where, the perſonal injury ſeems rather to lie than in the reaſon and principle, with which they were decreed and fulfilled.

But this repreſentation may be carried farther ſtill, to ſhew that caſes of injurious conſent have no relation or effect here. The ground of conſent, as it is to be attributed to Chriſt, reſults from the principles immediately preceding, as follows; that the ſame divine mind, which had been a principal in the original plan of Redemption, afterwards in an inſtrument of fleſh, prepared miraculouſly by the "power of the Higheſt" for that eſpecial purpoſe, conducted the accompliſhment of the ſcheme. This places the conſent of Chriſt in the light of one operation of the ſame divine will continued from firſt to laſt; in apparent proof, that the conſiſtency of the whole proceeding with rectitude may be preſumed, but that the poſſibility

bility of injurious advantage made of conſent may not. What may be added here is, that, whatever might be the particular purpoſe of God in laying thoſe ſufferings upon the fleſh of Chriſt, his decree had aſcertained to it an infinite overballance of reward. In the caſe of other ſufferers, it was before called a juſt preſumption, that their "light affliction which was but for a moment," might work for them a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." But what was to be preſumed in other caſes, was certain and known in the caſe of Chriſt, laid down and acted upon as a commanding motive. The ſufferings, then, and the glory of Chriſt's fleſh were in one plan; both were parts of one great ſcheme, not opened to him ſingly, but in connection with each other. Through the temporary ſufferings of the introductory part on earth he ſaw and devotedly and willingly took his certain way to everlaſting glory and honour in heaven. Can any concurrent purpoſe of God, even

if judicial, can the innocence of Chriſt, can any conſideration imaginable, put this caſe in any other light, but that of ſignal kindneſs to his fleſh, in laying upon it theſe ſufferings, with ſuch a recompence of glory in reſerve? And what other foundation for the conſent of Chriſt in the fleſh can we conceive aſſignable, except a juſt affection for his happineſs, guided by the perfection of knowlege? If theſe incomparable requiſites are taken into the caſe, the proverbial maxim, *Volenti non fit injuria*, which is ſaid to be falſe in numberleſs inſtances, ſeems in this concluſively true.

SECTION III.

General ſubſtance of the foregoing obſervations —the concluſion which they ſeem to authorize.

TAKEN in one view, then, the general ſubſtance of the former and the preſent obſervations ſtands thus.

The

The Word and Works of God exemplify the real and diſtinct action of thoſe attributes, by which he vouchſafes mercy, and inflicts puniſhment; but without any preſumption ſuggeſted by appearances, that both of them have not a neceſſary operation; ſo neceſſary, that ſinners may not preſume impunity, however penitents may hope for deliverance from the wrath to come. Juſt and true are all his ways; and the character and nature of rectitude is ſuch, as his meaſures delineate and exemplify it. There muſt, then, be no encouragement to found Redemption upon a principle, apparently the reverſe of that, on which God ſeems to have conducted his government. And as we have no ground for ſuppoſing that rectitude would preſcribe, in any divine ſcheme, a proceeding oppoſite to that which it ſeems to have preſcribed in others, we can hardly preſume it conſiſtent with divine rectitude, that the impunity of the guilty ſhould be included as an acceſſion in the reward of the Redeemer.

We

We ſeem to diſcern alſo in the courſe of the divine proceedings, from various examples, that the ſufferings of ſome perſons may, without any relation to ill-deſert in them, be properly penal for the ill-deſert of others. And conſidering this life as connected with another, and both to be in the view of God, though not of man, at the ſame time, we can no more pronounce that ſuch caſes contradict divine rectitude, than that other inequalities in the preſent adminiſtration of things infringe it. There appears, then, no ſufficient authority for calling it impoſſible, or preſuming it wrong, that ſufferings ſhould be laid on the fleſh of Chriſt, without any relation to his own innocence, on a penal conſideration of the ſins of mankind, as their cauſe. And upon conſent, reſulting, as it did in him, both from the perfection of that wiſdom, which acted principally in adjuſting the ſcheme of Redemption, and diſcerned all along its every part and dependency, and, alſo, from the complete view

of

of the glorious reward certainly appointed him, we ſeem forbidden to queſtion the rectitude of the merciful ſcheme.

Upon the whole, then, from the Apoſtolical aſſertions that "God, ſending his own Son" "condemned ſin in the fleſh," and that Chriſt gave himſelf "a ranſom for all," and died "for the redemption of tranſgreſſions," and from many expreſſions equivalent in each caſe, ſome may continue to think that Chriſt was judicially wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and that the penal "chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him;" and to this they will be the more readily diſpoſed, if it has been ſhewn that no juſt preſumption holds againſt the opinion they entertain.

ON THE

ANGELICAL MESSAGE

TO

THE VIRGIN MARY.

ON THE ANGELICAL MESSAGE TO THE VIRGIN MARY.

SECTION I.

The Angel's divine miſſion how made evident to the Virgin—character of Everlaſting King exclusively appropriated—prophetical views of it—it's accompliſhment in Jeſus.

"WHEN the time of the promiſe drew nigh," it was notified to a Virgin among the daughters of David, that Jeſus the promiſed Saviour ſhould be conceived in her womb by the immediate agency of God, and be "made fleſh."

The

The proper evidence of the divine miſſion of that angel by whom this notice was conveyed, was to her ſufficiently obvious. It was prophecy with an accompliſhment, not remote, but impending, and atteſted ſpeedily by feelings of her own. This, however, was only part of the evidence then vouchſafed to her.

The divine meſſenger had mentioned the caſe of Elizabeth. To her accordingly Mary went "with haſte," and found her in a ſtate that verified the angelical repreſentation. This circumſtance, of itſelf, extraordinary as it was in reſpect of Elizabeth, might have been convincing; it was however attended with another incomparably ſignal. Elizabeth on her part alſo immediately ſhewed an inſight into the divine purpoſe, and knew, not only the actual conception of Mary, but alſo ſo much of its cauſe and its object, as to hail her the mother of her Lord. It appeared that a divine revelation was vouch-

ſafed to Elizabeth, as it had been to the Virgin herſelf.

Theſe circumſtances carried ſuch evidence of a divine interpoſition, that the hymn of praiſe, which Mary forthwith uttered, was not more rapturous in point of devotion, than it was reaſonable in point of faith.

Such were the proofs in which ſhe then juſtly acquieſced; to us they come with a great acceſſion of ſtrength, from the ſubſequent accompliſhment of all thoſe characters, which the Angel then prophetically aſcribed to "that Holy Thing" which was to be born of her.

Of thoſe characters the Angel and preceeding prophets had indeed made the ſame diſplay, but without defect of evidence that the Angel, ſingly conſidered, was an original prophet. It may be aſcertained on whom, as the great object, the repreſenta-

tions of the Angel and the prophets coincided, and in what conſtruction may be determined from the ſenſe in which that great object, whom the Angel pointed out, afterwards aſſumed and thereby accompliſhed the characters, which they had reſpectively attributed to him.

But without pretending to ſo full a conſideration of the Angelical meſſage, as would completely anſwer this purpoſe, I attempt barely to ſhew that it may not be difficult to obtain conſiderable views of the light in which the Scriptures really place the character and perſon of the promiſed Redeemer. What the Scriptural repreſentation, in both theſe reſpects, may be, is a queſtion of fact; and as that entirely depends uponthe authority of the Scriptures themſelves, there ſeems more piety and more prudence in enquiring what they teach, than what different centuries and different men have profeſſed to teach from them.

It

It may, then, be introductory to the further reſearches of thoſe who will enquire for themſelves into the Scriptural repreſentation of the Redeemer, with a reſolution of adjuſting their faith to it, as far as they can aſcertain it, to conſider the characters aſcribed to him in the Angelical meſſage to the Virgin, as it ſtands in the Gopel of St. Luke.

One character of "that Holy Thing," which was to be born of Mary, is thus aſſigned; "the Lord God ſhall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end."

Preceding prophecies had uniformly preſented ſome great perſon under a kingly character in a ſtriking point of view.

After the divine promiſes had been limited to the line of Jacob, Iſaac prophetically

ſpeaks of Jacob's ſeed, that people ſhould "ſerve him" and "nations bow down to him," and that he ſhould be Lord over his brethren.

The ſame Regal eminence was recognized by Jacob in the bleſſing he delivered to Judah, and "the gathering of the people" was characteriſtically attributed to Shiloh, that ſhould come.

It was the prophetical language of Balaam, "out of Jacob ſhall come he that ſhall have dominion," and he characterized him perſonally as "a ſceptre."

To Nathan were revealed in viſion the words of God reſpecting David; "I will raiſe up thy ſeed after thee, which ſhall be of thy ſons, and I will eſtabliſh his kingdom—I will ſettle him in my houſe, and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for evermore."

David

David alſo commonly refers to that prediction of Nathan, and prophetically aſſerts the divine promiſe it contained; "I have found David my ſervant, with my holy oil have I anointed him—his ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and his throne as the ſun before me; it ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witneſs in heaven." And in the Pſalms, that predicted Seed is very frequently characterized by the attribute of everlaſting and univerſal dominion, and diſtinguiſhed by the name of David.

"Of the increaſe of his government and peace," ſays Iſaiah, "there ſhall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom." He ſtyles him "a rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe," and "a root of Jeſſe," that ſhould "ſtand for an enſign," and be given for "a leader and commander unto the people," and more than once appropriates to him the name of David.

Jeremiah, having ſtyled him "a righteous branch raiſed unto David," adds, that "as a king he ſhall reign and proſper," and elſewhere expreſsly names him David.

By Ezekiel the ſame divine promiſe was prophetically repeated; "I will ſet up one ſhepherd over them, and he ſhall feed them, even my ſervant David; and I the Lord will be their God, and my ſervant David a prince among them, I the Lord have ſpoken it;" and in another place, "my ſervant David ſhall be their prince for ever."

Daniel, who held the prophetical office under the Babyloniſh Captivity, beheld One in viſion inveſted with a dominion over "all people, nations, and languages," and with a kingdom not to paſs away or be deſtroyed.

Zechariah, after the return of Iſrael from captivity in Babylon, prophetically exclaims

claims to the daughter of Jeruſalem, "behold, thy King cometh unto thee;" and ſpeaks of him elſewhere, "he ſhall build the temple of the Lord, and he ſhall bear the glory, and ſhall ſit and rule upon his throne."

Thus, before and under the Captivity, and after it, that is, from an early period of prophecy to the lateſt, the ſame view, under occaſional acceſſions of light, was preſented of an univerſal and everlaſting king in the family of David. And as the conſtituent circumſtances of that regal character, which preceding prophets had gradually diſcloſed, are by the Angel accumulated, it ſeems that the prophetical and angelical revelations are parallel, and coincide upon the ſame pre-eminent perſon. For ſince the idea of two everlaſting and univerſal kingdoms implies a contradiction, it can ſcarcely be conceived, that more than one was intended. But if this point was actually diſputed, there are prophetical teſtimonies ſufficient to aſcertain

it. "David my ſervant ſhall be king over them, and they all ſhall have one ſhepherd," ſays Jeremiah; and Ezekiel to the ſame effect, "one king ſhall be king to them all; they ſhall be no more two kingdoms any more at all, and my ſervant David ſhall be their prince for ever;" and Zechariah ſtill more fully, "the Lord ſhall be king over all the earth, in that day ſhall there be one Lord, and his name one."

It ſeems, then, that it is this great prophetical character, which the Angel attributed perſonally to Jeſus, the future Son of the Virgin. And of the completion of it in him ſufficient evidence has been continually accruing from the time of his manifeſtation in the fleſh to this day. Although a king rather, before his Paſſion, in deſignation than in poſſeſſion, yet even then he manifeſted a power of his own, by giving laws to his Church ſupported with a ſanction of rewards and puniſhments; by commanding all natu-

ral

ral and ſpiritual beings, and even him that had the power of death. But after his reſurrection, he claimed actual poſſeſſion of that kingdom, which the prophets and the Angel after them aſcribed to him; "all power is given unto me in heaven and earth." And he aſſured the Twelve of his preſence with them by that authority and power, which now were his, "even to the end of the world," and exemplified that regal authority by ſending from heaven the promiſe of the Father upon them; and by uſing ſuch language, on appearing in viſion to St. John, as implied the preſent exerciſe of that kingly power; "he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he ſhall rule them with a rod of iron, as the veſſels of a potter ſhall they be broken to ſhivers, even as I received of my Father;" and by aſſerting that he held "the keys of hell and of death," and "the key of David." And after the delivery of that promiſe, he has been ſeen "coming in his kingdom" to

over-

overthow the temple and polity of Iſrael, and to advance his Goſpel above and in place of the Moſaical Law, although avowedly a diſpenſation of divine authority. And his regal dominion continues ſtill in a courſe of operation, in ſome of its parts plain and aſſignable.

From this accompliſhment of that regal character in the Son of the Virgin, which the prophets had diſplayed, and the Angel perſonally attributed to him, it ſeems to be aſcertained that they ſeverally ſpoke from divine revelation vouchſafed immediately to themſelves.

To this attribute of everlaſting dominion it will be of uſe to recur occaſionally; for as it excluſively belongs to one great object, and was claimed by Jeſus, and has continued from his appearance on earth to the preſent time demonſtrably verified in him, it will require and authorize the application of other characters to him, which the Scriptures may occaſionally place in conjunction with it.

SECTION

SECTION II.

The character, that he ſhould be born of a Virgin—prophetical views of that character, including with it that of Everlaſting King—accompliſhment of it in Jeſus—inferences as to the evidence of the divine miſſion of the Angel.

IN the prophetical meſſage of the Angel it is another character of the everlaſting king, that he ſhould be born of the Virgin Mary. Here, two characteriſtical circumſtances are implied, that he ſhould be born as a man, and of a Virgin.

I. Of theſe, the firſt is very intelligibly predicted. The original promiſe of God, in the very tenor of it, ſpecified the Seed of the Woman, and appropriated to him perſonally a future victory over the enemy of God and mankind.

"Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given," ſays the evangelical prophet, and ſubjoins

ſubjoins the regal character, " and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder" without end.

Of his forty-ninth chapter ſome verſes are applied to Chriſt in the New-Teſtament-Scriptures. The chapter opens thus; " Liſten, O Iſles, and hearken, ye people, from far, the Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name"—and again, " now ſaith the Lord, that called me from the womb to be his ſervant." He, whom kings and potentates were to worſhip, and the duſt of whoſe feet they were to lick up, namely the future univerſal King, here repreſents himſelf as called and formed from the womb of his mother, and dwells with a ſtriking ſignificance on that particular circumſtance of his character.

His birth, and the place of it, are predicted by Micah; " thou, Bethlehem-Ephratah

—out

—out of thee ſhall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Iſrael." The word, here rendered "ſhall come forth," commonly occurs in the ſenſe of natal egreſſion, and before the time of Chriſt it was in this paſſage ſo underſtood by the Jews.

II. To the ſecond characteriſtical circumſtance, that he ſhould be born of a Virgin, there are alſo ſome prophetical references.

To the houſe of David, when in fear of preſent extirpation by confederated enemies, Iſaiah delivered a prophecy with remote accompliſhment, and of courſe with an intelligible intimation of that very deliverance, which was then deſired; "the Lord himſelf ſhall give you a ſign, behold, a Virgin ſhall conceive and bear a Son."

To the ſame ſingular circumſtance Jeremiah has alſo prophetically alluded; "the Lord

Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman ſhall compaſs a man."

Theſe are ſome of the intelligible notices which God had given of his purpoſe reſpecting the incarnation of the everlaſting King; and correſpondent with them is that repreſentation which "that Holy Thing" which was born of Mary afterwards made of himſelf. In his miniſtry he uſually aſſumed the title, Son of Man, not without an apparent deſign of diſtinguiſhing himſelf as that peculiar Seed, which had been originally promiſed to the firſt parents of mankind, as well as that Son of man, whom the Lord would inveſt with glory and a kingdom, according to the ſignal prophecy of Daniel. And that filial and parental relation, which at the hour of his ſuffering he endeavoured to eſtabliſh virtually between Mary and his beloved diſciple, was that which he had always, and then particularly, recognized as having ſubſiſted really between himſelf and her.

Since,

Since, then, the prophets had thus aſcribed a birth as man, and from a Virgin-mother, to the everlaſting king, the point which places the Angelical meſſenger ſingly in the light of an original prophet, was the particular deſignation he made of the perſonal objects, when the prophets had ſtated only the characteriſtical attributes. That the Virgin-mother ſhould be Mary, and that the everlaſting king ſhould be her ſon, was a new and excluſive appropriation, which, as it was verified by a train of events to the production of which the almighty power of God only was equal, implies that a ſpecial communication of the divine will had been purpoſely vouchſafed to the Angel, and alſo that the characters of the Redeemer, and their genuine import, had been repreſented by the prophets, with the ſame adjuſtment to the mind of God, as their object was ſpecified by the Angel.

SECTION

SECTION. III.

The character, Son of God—prophetical conſtruction of that title ſhewn from ſeveral inſtances—application of the divine names—accompliſhment of the Angelical and Prophetical repreſentations, when Jeſus aſſumed that title—in what ſenſe he aſſumed it.

IN the Angelical meſſage it is another character of the everlaſting king, that was to be born of Mary, that he ſhould be called the "Son of God," in conſequence of his having God for his father, as really as he had the Virgin for his mother.

Of this character, alſo, as of thoſe preceding, there are direct notices in the previous language of God by his Prophets; "I will make him my firſt-born," and in another place, "I will be to him a Father, and he ſhall be to me a Son," and again, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." As theſe characters reſpectively ſtand aſ-

ſociated

ſociated with the peculiar attribute of everlaſting dominion, the prophetical and Angelical repreſentations are thereby ſhewn to be coincident upon the Son of Mary; and if ſo, the prophets and the Angel muſt be underſtood to apply to him the title, Son of God, in the very ſenſe wherein he aſſumed it, and thereby fulfilled their repreſentations.

Here, then, the proper enquiry relates, firſt, to the prophetical conſtruction of that title, and, ſecondly, to the ſenſe, in which Jeſus actually applied it to himſelf.

I. The import of the title Son of God, according to prophetical repreſentation, is excluſively tranſcendent.

" Unto the Son he ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." By the attribute of everlaſting dominion it appears that the ſacred writer to the Hebrews has juſtly applied this paſſage to the Son of God.

"A Virgin," ſays Iſaiah, "ſhall bear a Son, and ſhall call his name Emmanuel," which St. Matthew interprets, "God with us;" and by the ſame prophet in another place, the Child born, and the Son given unto us, is ſtyled "the Mighty God." By the diſtinguiſhing attribute of everlaſting dominion, which is ſubjoined in the laſt of the two paſſages, it is aſcertained that the Son of God, begotten of the Virgin, is the object of the prophecy. And as one of the proper names of God is therein aſcribed to the Son of God in as ſingular and abſolute a ſenſe as to the Father himſelf, there ſeems the beſt reaſon to believe that the Son is in fact, what he is repreſented in name, God as the Father is. Relative applications of that divine name, which is here uſed, as in the paſſage, "I have made thee a God unto Pharaoh," have been frequently ſhewn to authorize no oppoſite conſtruction. If the relation, which the words, "to Pharaoh," plainly imply, ſhould be taken away, ſtill it

cannot

cannot be ſaid that Moſes is there abſolutely called God. If he is not, but the Son is, abſolutely ſo called, it appears that this name of God is not applied to Moſes in that real and perſonal ſenſe, wherein it is aſcribed to the Son. Nor will applications of this divine name in the plural form, as in the paſſage "Ye are Gods" and in any of the ſame caſt, juſtify a contrary opinion. Between applications of it in ſuch a ſenſe as avowedly admits many, and thoſe which imply excluſion of more than one, there ſeems to be no analogy. In the firſt caſe it is virtually aſſerted that the ſeveral parties are not really what they are called, and the context, upon inſpection, will overrule any idea that they are; but in the laſt caſe it is far from evident that the ſingle party is called that which he is not, and in the context ſuch a concluſion has no ſupport.

And as the prophets aſcribe to the everlaſting king, that is, to the Son of God begotten of the Virgin, one of the proper

names of God, in an abſolute and unparallelled ſenſe, ſo alſo they attribute another as unreſervedly to him.

Iſaiah ſpake of Chriſt and of his glory, according to the teſtimony of St. John, in the viſion he deſcribes of the "Lord ſitting upon his throne," namely, of "the King, the Lord of hoſts." The Ruler of the houſe of Jacob for ever is here, as often in the Pſalms, ſtyled abſolutely "the King." The diſtinguiſhing attribute, then, but much more the expreſs authority of an Evangeliſt, appropriates thoſe characters, "the Lord," "the Lord of hoſts," to "that Holy Thing" which had a birth from the Virgin, and had God for his Father.

"Behold," ſays the ſame prophet, "the Lord God will come with ſtrong hand, and his arm ſhall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him, he ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd." By the attribute of Regal or Paſtoral rule, which

is

is diſtinguiſhing in the Son of God born of the Virgin, it appears that the prophet ſtyles him " the Lord Jehovah."

" Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord," by his prophet Jeremiah, " that I will raiſe unto David a righteous branch, and a King ſhall reign and proſper, and this is his name whereby he ſhall be called, the Lord our righteouſneſs." In this, as in previous inſtances, it ſeems evident from the regal diſtinction in this deſcendant of David, that the repreſentation of the prophet has the ſame object with that of the Angel, namely the Son of God, born of Mary.

In the paſſages immediadely preceding, the great king, that is, the Son of God born of the Virgin Mary, is called Jehovah, which the early Jews admitted to be the proper name of the Meſſias. This ſeems without example in Scripture. Sometimes the title, Jehovah, ſtands appellatively as part of the

name given to things, but by human impoſition of it merely, even when the thing was unqueſtionably known not to be Jehovah. But ſuch inſtances are not parallel; for the ſtrength of the caſe lies in this, that a perſon, namely the everlaſting king, bears properly, and not appellatively, the name of Jehovah, and that not aſcribed to him by man, but by the Spirit of God ſpeaking by his prophets. Judging, then, according to the difference of the caſes, we can hardly venture to ſay that the Son of God is no more Jehovah, than the thing is; but on the contrary, may reaſonably believe that the Son of God is perſonally and properly, what the Spirit of God has called him.

That the name of Jehovah is any where attributed to a created Angel, as repreſenting Jehovah, is not aſcertained. But if a clear inſtance of ſuch an application had been aſſigned, ſtill that application would be relative and not abſolute. On diſcharging the relation

tion implied in the notion of repreſenting God, it could not be, nor is it any where, ſaid of the Angel ſingly, that he is Jehovah. If not, the name of Jehovah being given to the Son, when he is conſidered perſonally and ſingly, then the attribute of that name implies him to be really what he is called, and not to be called relatively what he is not. This has been frequenly ſhewn from paſſages of Iſaiah's prophecy and from other places of Scripture.

Of him, who was to be ruler in Iſrael and be born at Bethlehem, Micah ſubjoins this character; "whoſe goings forth were from old from everlaſting." In the time of Chriſt, this paſſage was admitted by the Jews to reſpect the Meſſiah, and from the regal character, which occurs in the paſſage, it appears that the ſame object, namely "the Son of God to be born of Mary, is here characterized by a nativity from everlaſting." If there was not one ſenſe, in which his filial

relation to God, as his Father, had ſubſiſted "from everlaſting," and alſo one ſenſe, in which it commenced upon his incarnation in the Virgin's womb, then the prophet and the Angel will ſeem to have incurred a mutual contradiction, which in perſons, both of them ſpeaking by divine authority, is inconceivable.

It ſeems then, that according to prophetical repreſentations, the title, Son of God, did not import only that filial relation to the Father, which would commence at the future fullneſs of time, when the everlaſting king ſhould be begotten of the Virgin, but alſo, and much more, that which had ſubſiſted from eternity, and implied his perſonal deity.

II. The ſenſe, alſo, in which Chriſt aſſumed the title Son of God, was adjuſted to the prophetical repreſentations, and correſponded with the light in which they place it.

He

He called himſelf "the only begotten Son of God." This character excludes every gradation of that ὑιοθεσία, which St. Paul ſpeaks of, by which God is ſaid to have "many ſons," and aſſerts a filial relation to God by a real and natural generation, and not by mere adoption.

To the queſtion, "art thou then the Son of God," he replied by an aſſertion that God was his Father, πατέρα ἴδιον; and upon this the high-prieſt and people imputed blaſphemy to him. The ſenſe, then, in which he ſtyled himſelf Son of God, evidently was underſtood by them to be a real and tranſcendent ſenſe. Accordingly, the Jews ſaid, "by our law he ought to die, becauſe he made himſelf the Son of God;" and "they ſought to kill him becauſe he ſaid that God was his Father, making himſelf equal with God." And upon his aſſerting, "I and the Father are one, then took they up ſtones to caſt at him." Of this proceeding they explain

plain the reaſon; "for a good work we ſtone thee not, but for blaſphemy, and becauſe thou, being a man, makeſt thyſelf God." From the whole of this intereſting expoſtulation it appears evident that Jeſus, by aſſuming the title, Son of God, intentionally claimed a Sonſhip to the Father, not official, but natural, and implying equality with the Father, and perſonal Deity. That conſtruction, which they avowedly made, he did not decline, but defended. And even if the remark is true, that Son of God is but another title for Meſſiah, and that both theſe are interchangeably put the one for the other, ſtill the previous queſtion remains as to the reaſon of his being called Son of God. It ſeems that the anſwer, if adjuſted to the Scriptures, muſt be, that he really was what he is called, and was not officially called what naturally he was not. Accordingly he admitted the unreſerved addreſs of his Apoſtle Thomas, "my Lord, and my God,"

God," and gave a ſanction to the ſame faith in all future Chriſtians by the promiſe of a bleſſing.

SECTION IV.

Character of a Saviour implied in the name, Jeſus—prophetical applications of that character to the everlaſting king—accompliſhment of it in Jeſus—general amount of preceding obſervations—inſtances to ſupport it.

THE name of Jeſus, which the Angel appropriated to the Son of God and of the Virgin Mary, implies alſo, according to the conſtruction of St. Matthew, the character of a Saviour.

Agreeably to the particular application here made, that eminent perſon, whom foregoing prophets commonly repreſented as given for ſalvation, and ſent to make reconciliation, to "ſprinkle the nations," and to "juſtify

"juſtify many," they at the ſame time and in the ſame places characterized no leſs commonly as the everlaſting king. Of this it will be ſufficient to give the following examples.

The promiſe of God to his people is thus delivered by Iſaiah; "I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David; behold, I have given him for a witneſs to the people, a leader and commander to the people." The covenant to be eſtabliſhed by the myſtical David, that is, by the everlaſting king, is here repreſented as a diſpenſation of ſure mercies that were his.

"To finiſh tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs and to ſeal up the viſion and the prophecy," are purpoſes which the prophet Daniel repreſents as depending upon Meſſiah the Prince.

Of

Of that exultation and ſhout which Zechariah would excite in the daughter of Jeruſalem, he thus aſſigns the reaſon, "behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is juſt and having ſalvation;" and again; "he ſhall ſpeak peace unto the heathen, and his dominion ſhall be from ſea even to ſea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."

The repreſentatons of the Angel and the prophets ſeem, then, in this inſtance, as in others, coincident; and according to them, the Son of the Virgin, as he was the everlaſting king, was alſo the univerſal Saviour, and all "the promiſes of God in him were Yea, and in him Amen."

That Jeſus, by his miniſtry, ſufferings, and death, had fulfilled this character of univerſal Saviour, which the Angel had by that very name virtually appropriated to him, he gave, when riſen again, ſufficient evidence to thoſe perſons, whom he had choſen expreſsly

preſsly for the purpoſe of atteſting that accompliſhment to the world; "thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer and to riſe from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jeruſalem, and ye are witneſſes of theſe things." And further, that by him the divine promiſes of univerſal ſalvation have been accompliſhed, is in ſome degree demonſtrable from the preſent exerciſe of his regal authority in ſupport of his Goſpel that contains the terms of it; but in a greater degree, from thoſe ſigns and mighty works, with which he enabled his appointed witneſſes to authenticate the teſtimony they gave that God had highly exalted him "with his right-hand to be a Prince and a Saviour."

There ſeems, then, to be no defect of evidence that, as the prophets by the ſpirit of Chriſt which was in them, according to St. Peter, "teſtified before hand the ſufferings of

of Chriſt and the glory that ſhould follow," the Angel alſo by the ſame divine Spirit, prophetically ſpecified the ſon of the Virgin Mary as the true object of their prophecies, as the Saviour whom they had foretold.

Of all the preceding obſervations this appears to be the general amount. One, and only one, everlaſting king was predicted, and as Son of God, repreſented as God, and, as ſon of the Virgin, repreſented as man, with this addition, that he was the univerſal Saviour. With this prophetical repreſentation the terms of the Angelical meſſage to Mary coincide; and as the Angel has appeared, by the completion of each particular character which he inſtanced, and by that very object whom he named, to have ſpoken by the authority of God, who alone can declare the end from the beginning, and, by appointing every intermediate proceſs and inſtrument of his work, eventually adjuſt the one to the other, the conſequence ſeems to be, that Je-

ſus

ſus was, of his mother, really man, and, of his Father, really God, thus manifeſted in the fleſh to accompliſh the promiſed Redemption of the world.

To ſupport this concluſion, in all it's parts, it may be added that the divinity and humanity of his perſon, with a reference to his paſſion, are included in expreſſions uſed either by the prophets, or by himſelf, or by his Apoſtles. The following inſtances only will be produced.

In the thirteenth chapter of Zechariah's prophecy there is the following paſſage; "Awake, O ſword, againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of hoſts; ſmite the Shepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." Of this verſe part is referred by Chriſt himſelf to his own paſſion, and to the deſertion of his Apoſtles; and by an application of ſuch authority it

it is aſcertained that under the character of "Shepherd" the prophet ſpecifies the Son of God. The Lord of hoſts, then, ſtyles him "the man that is my fellow." This he could not be, if man only, for in the human nature he was made avowedly "a little lower than the Angels;" nor was he ſo, as an Angel, for by the ſacred writer to the Hebrews he is proved properly and naturally ſuperior to Angels. It remains our only conſtruction, that if, being man, he was yet the "fellow" of the Lord of hoſts, he partook of a nature which was neither human nor angelical, but uncreated and divine.

By the application which Chriſt has partly made of the foregoing paſſage to his Paſſion, he ſeems, in fact, to have admitted that the prophet had truly repreſented the Lord of hoſts as ſtyling him "the man that is my fellow." We may proceed, however, from a conſtruction that moſt probably was his, to an expreſs declaration of his own. "Have I been

ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip? He that hath ſeen me hath ſeen the Father; and how ſayeſt thou, ſhew us the Father? Believeſt thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I ſpeak unto you, I ſpeak not of myſelf; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works; believe me, that I am in the Father and the Father in me." As man he had been long known to Philip by ſenſible evidence, but by the evidence of faith he might have been known to be more than man; but the diſciple had it yet to learn, that the divinity of the Father was in him, as really as it was in the Father, and was as far viſible, as far cognizable, in the one as in the other. From his own aſſertion here it may be diſcerned with what truth and on what account the Lord of hoſts might ſtyle him, "the man that is my fellow."

The Apoſtle John aſſerts that "God laid down his life for us." If the Redeemer who died

died had been man only, it could not be ſaid that God laid down for us a life that was perſonally his own; and God could not be ſaid to lay down a life, that was thus his own and yet muſt be the life of man, unleſs there were in one perſon Deity to devote, and Humanity to die. From the divinity in Chriſt his miracles proceeded; on the human nature his ſufferings lay; by death his human ſoul and body were divided, yet his human and divine nature were ſtill in union, although not bodily. The "temple of his body" was raiſed again by his divinity, and thus "the fullneſs of the Godhead bodily" dwelt in him again. Such was his perſon when he aſcended, and ſuch it will be when he returns to compleat his victory over Death, the laſt enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed.

From the repreſentation of the prophets, from the characteriſtical titles in the meſſage of the Angel, from the import in which

the Son of the Virgin claimed and aſſumed them, and from the ſubſequent Apoſtolical teſtimony, there appears a plain conſent of evidence in ſupport of the following extract.

"Thus God exhibited himſelf to men, in the perſon of his Son; and he appeared, in the ſhape and form of man, familiarly to men. The human nature of the Son of God was conſecrated into a living temple, by his reſidence in, and union with, it: and God the Word ſo acquainted himſelf with mortal men, by the inſtrument of a body, as Euſebius ſays. He demonſtrated his divine perfections, in the uſing of our nature. Such a nature as ours, which is rational and material, was fit for the eternal Λόγος, for God the Word, to ſhew himſelf in to men; and when he ſhewed himſelf, he ſhewed the moſt high God; for he is God of God. Therefore he ſaid 'He that hath ſeen me hath ſeen the Father;' and, 'he that ſeeth me, ſeeth him that ſent me.'

Thus

Thus was God gloriouſly and ſenſibly manifeſted unto men; when he came down to men, in the likeneſs of man and in our nature diſcovered his own. And when he appeared in human nature, he diſcovered himſelf by divine works, and his glory was diſcloſed by his actions. If any one looked upon the man Chriſt Jeſus, there was no ſenſible glory about his head, that might diſtinguiſh him from others; but there was an intellectual luſtre, with which wiſdom and goodneſs adorned him. His words and deeds were ſuch, as mere man never did exhibit; and upon his ſpeeches and actions there were marks of divinity viſible. His miracles were ſuch, as no power, but that of God, could do; and with them he entertained and aſtoniſhed the minds of men, who expreſſed their admiration, ſaying, "what manner of man is this." Beſides, theſe miracles were all acts of love; and men were affected at them, as at the obſervation of greatneſs and goodneſs. At the ſame time,

the obliged and amazed multitude were entertained by the divine reaſon with diſcourſes full of wiſdom and virtue, ſuch as were moſt worthy of God, and moſt profitable to men. Thoſe who heard him ſpeak ſuch wiſdom as never man ſpake, ſaw him live ſuch virtue as never man lived; and celeſtial holineſs cloathed the Son of man with glory. He was thus a living law of virtue, and the ſubſtantial doctrine of wiſdom, and a ſenſible manifeſtation of power; and yet a man, like unto us in all things, except thoſe glories, and except our vicious infirmities. Here then was human nature in view, and human converſation obſervable: but in all this, a divine wiſdom, goodneſs, and power, did appear. Here was the life of God exhibited in the nature of men; and the inviſible divinity did appear, veiled in the ſenſibleneſs of humanity. His converſation was familiar, and yet ſtupendous; and every appearance was wonderful, but not terrible. Such a manifeſtation of God there was, as obliged men to

the

the greateſt veneration of him; and what the Son of God did, was moſt God-like. Such an one is he, who is the ſupreme in the ſpiritual kingdom of God; and none other was either worthy or fit to be ſupreme, but he, who by his appearance could ſhew us the Father, and reconcile us unto him.

We know in whom we believe, and in whom we confide; to whom we ſubject our conſciences, and from whom we expect our ſalvation. It is from that glorious and divine perſon, who is the Son of God; and it is from God 'manifeſted in the fleſh.' Such is the perſon, and ſuch is the glory, of the ſupreme Lord."

ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND OF THE BODY.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

SECTION I.

Credibility of the Witneſſes to Chriſt's reſurrection confirmed from their number—from their perſonal character—from the conſideration of the place, where they began their teſtimony—from the time when they began it.

OUR bleſſed Lord delivered two diſtinct promiſes, that he would raiſe up himſelf, and that he would raiſe up all men, from the dead. The confidence we entertain that he

he will fulfill the ſecond, reſults in a great meaſure from the evidence we have that he has fulfilled the firſt; and after we have found that his own reſurrection is ſufficiently atteſted, we may then humbly endeavour to form the beſt ideas we can of the extent and ſenſe in which he may be expected to accompliſh the "redemption of our body" from death.

As the reſurrection of our Lord is a poſſible thing, and, if it happened, was aſcertained by ſenſible evidence, the credibility of the fact cannot be reaſonably reſiſted, if there are no appearances of invalidity in that teſtimony, which was offered to ſupport it. That there are none, it may be eaſy to ſhew from ſome obvious conſiderations.

I. The teſtimony, that is offered, has the greater weight from the very number of the witneſſes.

The

"The thing was not done in a corner." "He was ſeen, ſays St. Paul, of Cephas, then of the Twelve; after that, he was ſeen of above five hundred brethren at once, and after that, he was ſeen of James, then of all the Apoſtles; laſt of all he was ſeen of me alſo." In this detail, the argument in proof of Chriſt's reſurrection plainly turns on the number of the witneſſes to it. Credit has, in ſome inſtances, been gained by the teſtimony of ſeveral intermediate vouchers, when it was poſſible to trace the whole of it upward to the ſource in the teſtimony of one and that precarious. But the teſtimony delivered by the Apoſtles of Chriſt is not open to this exception. Their language is "this Jeſus hath God raiſed up, whereof we all are witneſſes," that is, all upon the ſame equal ground, which is implied in the queſtion of St. Paul, "have not I ſeen the Lord?" And it may be added to ſtrengthen the caſe, that their teſtimony was founded upon the ſame ſenſible evidence vouchſafed and repeated at different times.

There

There ſeems but one principle which renders it poſſible to account for the univerſal agreement of ſo many in the whole of their teſtimony. Simplicity and conſiſtence are the genuine characters of truth, whether it is aſſerted by one or by many. If any one, or any few, among the witneſſes had projected a ſcheme of impoſture, he or they would have perceived, as deceivers commonly do, that the probability of concealing the deceit muſt be proportionably leſs as the number that concerted it was greater; and in the caſe before them, would have acted accordingly. But of this there is not the leaſt appearance; and as their number was large, and yet their agreement univerſal, and as the evidence, upon which each of them grounded their teſtimony of Chriſt's reſurrection was to them all equally and repeatedly ſenſible, it ſeems a reaſonable and indeed an unavoidable concluſion, that they have truly "teſtified of God that he raiſed up Chriſt."

II. The

II. The conſideration of their perſonal character may be alſo added to confirm their teſtimony. They were virtuous men, and even when almoſt entering upon their miniſtry, they were nothing more. Neither previous education, nor habits of life, had prepared them to conduct an impoſition upon the publick with ſucceſs. Ignorant of the arts of leading a multitude, and gaining the paſſions of men, they had no probability of obtaining credit to a ſtory, that claſhed with popular views and with the prejudices of their times. In fact, they were ſo far from intending to work ſuch a revolution in the minds of their countrymen, that it was but commencing in their own. It was the irrefragable truth of the things they aſſerted, that ſlowly unſettled their deareſt prejudices, and inſtantly overcame their ſtrongeſt fears. Intire was the revolution it ſuddenly wrought in the temper of their minds. It expoſed them willing and unrepentant ſacrifices, to linger in livelong ſufferings, ended only by miſerable death.

Such

Such a change and ſuch invincible fortitude, in men of their previous principles and character, are irreconcileable with conſcious impoſture. Nothing could change them all out of equal weakneſs into equal ſtrength, in an inſtant, and ſo actuate them for a length of time, but the commanding ſenſe of duty, and a heart-felt conviction that their teſtimony was true.

III. The conſideration of the place, where the witneſſes began their teſtimony of Chriſt's reſurrection, will alſo ſupport their credibility. If they had publiſhed the reſurrection of their Lord at firſt, as they did afterwards, in countries remote from Judæa, wherein it happened, ſuſpicion might have been entertained of a deſign in them to make advantage of that difficulty to examine their ſtory, which diſtance of place would occaſion. For in whatever degree the facility of obtaining true information is leſſened, in the ſame proportion the probability

lityof eſtabliſhing falſehood will be increaſed. But they firſt aſſerted the reſurrection of Jeſus in that very city, wherein it happened, and where, of courſe, any fraud or falſehood in their teſtimony might have been detected with greateſt eaſe and expedition. That proviſion which it would have indiſpenſably required, if it had been falſe, was ſuperfluous, only becauſe it was true.

IV. The credibility of the witneſſes to the reſurrection of Jeſus may alſo be ſupported by a conſideration of the Time when they began to deliver their teſtimony.

If they had not publickly aſſerted the reſurrection of their Maſter, till a conſiderable time after it was ſaid to have happened, ſome ſuſpicion might have been incurred by ſuch heſitation and delay. Time and deliberation were neceſſary for them, it might have been ſaid, to put their ſcheme together and adjuſt the ſeveral parts of it, that it might ſhew itſelf clear of all diſagreement, either of the

witneſſes or the facts with each other. But they acted otherwiſe; after all the evidences of their Lord's reſurrection had been vouchſafed, which he intended to give them perſonally upon earth, ten days were ſcarcely elapſed before they publiſhed that Goſpel, which has ſafely ſtood the teſt of the moſt ſuſpicious ſcrutiny for many ages. But if it was poſſible that they ſhould have really formed in ſo ſhort a time a ſyſtem of falſehood, they could not have choſen a more unfavourable ſeaſon for attempting to introduce it. It would have been for them a ſurer way, to have waited till ſome abatement had taken place in the vigilance and inveteracy of their foes. But there was nothing of this in their proceeding. To deliberate long, or indeed at all, upon the ſyſtem of their teſtimony was not neceſſary for them, becauſe they were not the authors of it; and as they knew it to be true, and had diſcarded all fears for their perſonal ſafety, it was natural that they ſhould publiſh it, as they did, without delay, even among bitter adverſaries.

Thus

Thus from the number and the character of thoſe that aſſerted the reſurrection of Chriſt, in the place where, and ſo near the time when it happened, it ſeems to be clear that they are not falſe witneſſes, and that Chriſt really roſe from the dead.

SECTION. II.

General reſurrection to be inferred from that of Chriſt—reply to the objection that the reſurrection of the body is needleſs—in what light the body appears on Chriſtian principles—reſurrection of it not needleſs in the caſe of the Impenitent—in that of the Penitent neceſſary.

THE foregoing circumſtances, and any other that are commonly offered in ſupport of the Apoſtolical teſtimony that God raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, will alſo have ſome effect in confirming the great inference from his reſurrection, that he is " the firſt-fruits of

them that" ſleep. For it is a violence to break the relation between them; " if Chriſt be preached that he roſe from the dead how ſay ſome among you, that there is no reſurrection of the dead?"

The objections that have been urged in every age againſt this inference ſeem to be founded chiefly on one principle. It was adopted very early from the heathen philoſophy, and has always been adopted by thoſe who were deſirous of accommodating the word of God to the wiſdom of this world. This principle placed the human body in the light of a mere incumbrance, an impure and abject thing. But that philoſophy which is properly Chriſtian, and treats of human nature with due deference to Scriptural information, places the body in a very different view. It is the language of the inſpired Writer, " know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghoſt?" And greatly will the body riſe in eſteem upon the reflect-

reflection that " as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood," the Son of God " likewiſe took part of the ſame", and after living upon earth in their likeneſs, aſcended up to heaven in faſhion as a man; and as he is gone thither to reign in the fleſh now, ſhall ſo come again in like manner, that is, in the fleſh, to judge the world hereafter.

If then our opinion of the body be adjuſted to Scriptural principles, we ſhall be at no loſs for an anſwer to that objection, which Celſus drew from the old philoſophy, and ſome moderns have revived in different ſhapes againſt the reſurrection of the body, that it is entirely needleſs. We may reply upon the authority and in the very inference of St. Paul " the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body;" " and God hath both raiſed up the Lord, and will alſo raiſe up us, by his own power."

But though in anſwer to this objection, as far as it may affect the caſe of the righteous ſingly,

it might be ſufficient to aſſert the real dignity of the body, on Chriſtian principles, yet another conſideration may be added, namely, that the ends of the divine government, and the accompliſhment of the ſcheme of redemption, ſeem to require and imply an univerſal reſurrection of the fleſh.

With reſpect to the Impenitent, who are objects of the divine vengeance only, it may be obſerved, that as they ſerve the luſts of the body, and pervert it to an inſtrument of unrighteouſneſs in this life, the judgment would be as juſt as it would be ſignal, if God ſhould make the body, in another life alſo, an inſtrument of miſery to them, and an inlet to none but painful and grievous ſenſations, to ſhew them their ſin in their puniſhment. The Scriptures ſuggeſt and authorize this expectation, by awakening in us the fear of him, "who hath power to caſt both body and ſoul into hell." So that there ſeems no reaſon to repreſent the reſurrection of

of the body as needleſs even in the caſe of the Impenitent, who under the government of God, are to undergo the "tribulation and anguiſh," whch he has denounced.

But the caſe of the Penitent, for whom, as heirs of the promiſes, the ſcheme of redemption was ordained, ſeems plainly to require the reſurrection of the body. For, unleſs they, who "have been planted together in the likeneſs" of the death of Chriſt, ſhall alſo, as he is "the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept," be raiſed "in the likeneſs of his reſurrection," redemption will not ſeem verified to the full extent of the promiſe. For, as the divine denuntiation to our firſt father that ſinned, and in him to all mankind, ran in the terms, "duſt thou art, and to duſt ſhalt thou return," ſo alſo the Holy Spirit prophetically reverſes the caſe, "awake, and ſing, ye that dwell in duſt." Accordingly the redemption of the body from the ſentence of death, that was "written"

in it, is called that "adoption" for which we "groan within ourſelves." And as Chriſt taught and exemplified the redemption of the body from death, and has promiſed it a real intereſt of its own in the bleſſedneſs of heaven, he may be ſaid in this obvious and endearing ſenſe to have "brought life and immortality to light." The hope of a future life had been entertained before his coming; but it was chiefly grounded on the natural arguments for the immortality of the ſoul, not only without any ſpecial attention, but even with an indifference, to the body. But that intereſt, which God had vouchſafed to give it in his promiſes, was firſt unfolded and ſecured by our Lord. So that the "bondage of corruption," to which the body is ſubject, which ſuggeſted the objection that the reſurrection of it was needleſs, is the very principle that ſhews it to be neceſſary. According to the Apoſtle, it is ſubjected in hope, and waiteth for "the manifeſtation of the ſons of God, to wit, the redemption

of

of our body." Upon Chriſtian principles, then, the body cannot be excluded from a real ſhare in the promiſes of God, nor can the ſcheme of redemption be made conſiſtent with itſelf and complete in all its parts, without a real reſurrection of that part of our nature, which died and was buried.

SECTION III.

Reply to the objection from changes, by death, and by a body of glory put on—of identity, God alone a perfect, but man an imperfect, example—identity of body, under a faſhion of glory put on, exemplified in the transfiguration of our Lord—in the caſe of thoſe who ſhall not ſleep, but be changed.

BUT here another exception is made. Changes that will take place in the body, even by death and the conſequences of it, and much more by the converſion of the corruptible and natural body into an incorruptible and glorious body, are repreſented as total; and

and hence it is contended that the raiſed body cannot be the ſame with that which was buried.

This objection, in both its points, turns upon the difficulties of the caſe; but againſt demonſtrations, if any are attainable, they are of no validity. The neceſſary enquiry here will be, whether theſe changes in the body are either of them ſubverſive of identity in it. Accordingly I ſhall endeavour to ſhew from actual fact and Scriptural examples, that the change of the body from "vile" to "glorious," and the change made in it by death, do not either of them prevent the identity of it from ſubſiſting really, as in preceding life.

By the word, identity, we commonly expreſs two very diſſimilar ideas. Whatever has not undergone any degree of change, or not ſo much of it as thereby to become another and new thing, we indifferently call the ſame.

Of

Of the firſt ſenſe of the term, God without "variableneſs or ſhadow of turning," eſſentially as well as morally "the ſame yeſterday today and for ever," is alone a juſt example. To him we may apply it with ſtrict preciſion. But to no other being, in all the varieties of ſublunary nature, can it be applied in this ſenſe, or in any, that is not conſiſtent with certain degrees of chance. When identity is attributed to the human body for the ſhorteſt period of time, the expreſſion is uſed, not in an abſolute, but a relative ſenſe. Of ſtrict and philoſophical identity the human body is no example for any two periods of time; ſince changes, certainly partial, and nearly entire, ſome ſenſible, ſome inſenſible, confeſſedly take place in it continually during life. From preſent appearances the rule ought to be taken for determining the identity of the raiſed and buried body. Although "our earthly houſe of this tabernacle" is diſſolving and dying daily, and cannot be ſupported without divers acceſſions incorporated

rated in it from time to time, yet there is a ſenſe, though not a ſtrict and philoſophical one, in which it continues actually the ſame body. And ſince, under theſe appearances, change and identity are experimentally conſiſtent in the human body, in what degrees, beyond what we have yet actually ſeen, they may or may not be made compatible by infinite power, we can ſcarcely preſume to ſay. At leaſt it may be obſerved, that there is nothing in preſent appearances, that can be preſumed to diminiſh the evidence ariſing from Scriptural examples, if any occur applicable to the caſe.

From real inſtances, then, in Scripture it may be ſhewn that a faſhion of glory put on will not change the body ſo far, as to prevent it from continuing the ſame in another life that it was in this, in that ſenſe in which it can be truly called the ſame body from time to time before death.

That

That a body of glory may "through the mighty working" of God, be made conſiſtent with the ſameneſs of the human body, ſeems evident from the transfiguration of our Lord, and from the appearance in glory of Moſes and Elias with him, both diſtinctly cognizable by the three diſciples in the "holy mount." In a former conſideration of this point, I endeavoured to ſhew at ſome length, that in the three Apoſtles, who were then preſent, the knowledge of their Lord ſubſiſted before and during that viſion of glory. From the two, who appeared in glory with their Lord, they diſtinguiſhed him, and them alſo from each other. An extraordinary change in features, perſon, and raiment took place in the body of Chriſt, and even when clothed with his body of glory, they hailed him Lord and Maſter. In him, and in Moſes and Elias, a form of glory aſſumed did not infringe their cognizable identity; under a change from vile to glorious bodies, all appeared and were known to be the ſame. Referring

ferring then to as much of the reflections, then made, as may be concerned here, I proceed to other Scriptural caſes.

Another example ſeems to be implied in the particular caſe of thoſe perſons, who ſhall be alive and remain at the ſecond coming of Chriſt. The Apoſtle aſſerts that "we ſhall not all ſleep but we ſhall all be changed," that is, from corruptible to incorruptible, from mortal to immortal. In all ſuch perſons it muſt be admitted that the identity of the body will ſubſiſt really, till they are inveſted with glory. But if they will not retain the ſame bodies after this change, which they had before it, then it muſt be ſaid that their bodies will be extinct, and reduced to the ſleep of death; but this will bring them under the common caſe of other men, and deſtroy the very exception which is made by the Apoſtle. His meaning was, that in them the exiſtence of the body would not be interrupted at all, which is in fact to

ſay

ſay that the identity thereof would be preſerved, although it were changed. So that it ſeems the body will not ceaſe to be the ſame after its change to a faſhion of glory, in like manner as it did not ceaſe to be the ſame after the continual changes that befel it during life.

As a right apprehenſion of this matter appears of ſome importance, let me endeavour to make myſelf fully underſtood, by repeating my conception of it in other terms more conciſely. In every perſon of that particular deſcription, life muſt continue in the ſame body till the time of its change to a "glorious body"; and if it ſhould be ſaid, that each of them then received another and a new body, it muſt be ſaid too that they ſeverally die, for the ſleep of death is the extinction of the body. But the Apoſtle expreſsly ſpeaks of thoſe who do not ſleep, and therefore neceſſarily of thoſe, who retain thenceforwards the ſame bodies which they had till then, however "clothed upon" with glory.

This

This particular caſe put by the Apoſtle may therefore be called an example to the purpoſe before us, as it implies that the change from corruptible to incorruptible is conſiſtent with the identity of the body.

SECTION IV.

Reply to the objection that changes by death will prevent the identity of the raiſed and buried body—Scriptural caſes and examples.

THUS one part of the objection, that the change of the natural body to a body of glory is inconſiſtent with the identity of it, appears contradicted by Scriptural caſes; and that the other part of the objection, namely, that the change by death and its conſequences irrevocably breaks the identity of the body, ſeems as evidently to diſagree with Scriptural facts and principles.

I. The firſt example I might produce, is that of Chriſt himſelf, for as he gave "many infallible proofs" that he had brought again from

from the grave the ſame body, which had been depoſited in it, the identity of the raiſed and buried body was actually exemplified in him. And as he "is the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept," and the reſt of the dead will be conformed to his likeneſs, the caſe of our Lord, as far as it goes, is an inſtance to the preſent purpoſe. But as he "ſaw no corruption," his reſurrection may not perhaps in every poſſible extent aſcertain the point to be proved, that change by death will not prevent the identity of the raiſed and buried body.

II. A ſtronger inſtance occurs in the caſe of Lazarus. That the diſſolution of his body had advanced to a very ſenſible degree, is plain from the words of Martha; and her apprehenſion that this circumſtance would impede "the mighty working" of him who was "the reſurrection and the life," was corrected by his mild rebuke, "ſaid I not unto

thee, that if thou wouldeſt believe thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God?" He ſpake, and the waſted body in the grave heard his voice; and the conſolation of the ſiſter, the wonder and converſion of the people, and the reſentment of the prieſts, had all no aſſignable ground but this, that Lazarus lived again in the ſame body, in which he had lived before. And the words of Chriſt to Martha, juſt cited, ſeem to imply and eſtabliſh the point here defended, that, notwitſtanding the change of the body by death, the glory of God will be ſeen in the revival of the ſame body that died.

III. Another example will verify the principle in a greater extent. St. Matthew relates that "the graves were opened, and many dead bodies of ſaints, which ſlept, aroſe and came out of the graves, after" Chriſt's "reſurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." The reduction of the

the body to its original elements had proceeded very far in many of theſe caſes, and probably in ſome was compleated. Yet the bodies " that came out of the graves and appeared unto many," gave them a ſenſible recognition of ſaints that ſlept. And this effect apparently implies that the bodies, which came out of the graves, were cognizably the ſame which had previouſly exiſted upon earth. So that in whatſoever degree change by death may be ſuppoſed to have enſued, there ſeems no ſufficient reaſon to preſume it will prevent the reſurrection of that very body, which had previouſly been committed to the grave.

IV. In the preceding example, ſenſible recognition was an effect of identity in the bodies, that appeared. It may then be added here in the caſe of all mankind, that if mutual recognition has a place in a future life, it becomes evident that the ſame body which died will be raiſed again. And agreeably

to the natural hope of all men in all ages, the language and analogies of Scripture lead us to expect this mutual recognition in another life.

The patriarch Jacob reſted his hope upon this principle, "I ſhall go down to the grave to my ſon." "I ſhall go to him," ſaith David, on the death of his beloved child. "I know that he ſhall riſe again," ſaith Martha, reſpecting her buried brother. Upon a preſumption of meeting and recognizing the lamented relative, the remark of each ſuggeſts comfort that is real. But if from their words the hope of mutual recognition be excluded, how poor will be the remaining amount of their reflections? The Patriarch can then be underſtood to ſay only that he ſhould die, as his ſon had died; and the reflection of David will import no more than this, that ſorrow for his child ought now to be reſtrained, becauſe it could not recall him, "I ſhall go to him, but he ſhall not return to me." Martha

tha muſt be alſo ſuppoſed to mean only, that her brother would indeed riſe again, though parted from her for ever.

The queſtion, "whoſe wife ſhall ſhe be of the ſeven," implied that the relation of the ſeven and their relict would be recollected and their perſons mutually recognized; and the reply of our Lord gives no diſcouragement to that idea.

Theſe are caſes of affection, which is a particular branch of that charity, that "now abideth," and "never faileth;" and as it "now abideth" by means of perſonal knowlege interchanged between men, ſo as it "never faileth," there ſeems reaſon to expect it will revive hereafter by mutual recognition.

The rich man, and Abraham, and Lazarus, in the parable are repreſented as remembring the events and intereſts of previous life, and recognizing the perſon of each

other—In the book of Revelations it is ſaid reſpecting our Lord, "every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo, which pierced him," and the prophet had foretold, "they ſhall look on him whom they pierced;" and our Lord thus prays, "Father, I will that they, whom thou haſt given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." Such language is clear upon the principle of mutual recognition, but not without it. The ſame may be ſaid of the words, "Ye ſhall ſee Abraham and Iſaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God;" they imply that Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, will be cognizable in another world by the ſenſes of others, in the ſame manner as our Lord, and Moſes, and Elias, all appearing in glory and two of them long after death, were ſenſibly known and diſtinguiſhed by the Apoſtles in the "holy mount."

The words of St. Paul to the Theſſalonians, "what is our hope and crown of rejoicing

rejoicing, are not ye, in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming;" and, "he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus, and preſent us with you," proceed upon the firm expectation which he had of meeting and recognizing his converts in the preſence of the Lord, after the reſurrection of the dead.

If, then, this mutual recognition in a future life, which has ever been the favourite hope of mankind, is alſo, as it appears to be, the doctrine of the Scriptures, it ſeems ſcarcely poſſible to ſuppoſe that death infers a total change, and that the body raiſed in another life, will not be the ſame that lived in this.

The principle therefore, of which theſe few, out of many, Scriptural evidences have been produced, may be thus expreſſed in all its parts. As actual fact evinces that continual changes in the body, which take place now, are conſiſtent with the identity thereof

from the beginning to the end of life; ſo alſo the Scriptures not only intimate, but alſo exemplify, that neither a change to glory, nor any degree of change by death, will prevent its riſing again in another life no leſs the ſame body, than it was ſo in this.

What an opening, then, what an enlargement is here given to our views by the Chriſtian philoſophy of man! There is no refuſe, there is nothing outcaſt in our nature, but the divine government and promiſes reſpect both the outward and inward man; and what all ſeverally are as men and friends and brethren in this life, that they will revive in the preſence of God, and in the recognition of each other, in the next; and whatever contributed to dignify and to endear our firſt exiſtence, ſhall alſo be renewed in another, and then be improved to conſtitute our glory and bleſſedneſs for ever. Happy for man, if this conſideration be permitted to work to the purpoſe of God; if either by animating the virtuous

virtuous in the ſtruggles of duty, or alarming ſinners in the midſt of danger, it conducts all to ſuch a ſtate of religious improvement, that in every condition, every infirmity, and even at the cloſe of life, they may cordially appropriate that aſſurance, in which the religious ſage reſted; "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my ſkin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not another."

ON

HUMILITY.

A

DISCOURSE.

ON

HUMILITY.

A

DISCOURSE.

GAL. v. 26.

Let us not be deſirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

IT has been obſerved, that human life is a ſtate of ſuffering: and, in a certain degree, ſuch a repreſentation of it has a foundation in truth. The remark may be traced up to the earlieſt ages, and the moraliſts of antiquity were ſo ſtrongly convinced of its truth, that in their endeavours to elevate or defend

defend the human mind, they have directed their principles, not only againſt the influence of the evil, but alſo of the good that might occur in human life.

Some among them have attempted to prevent the dangerous enchantment of proſperity, by recommending, in an exalted ſtrain, the contempt of worldly good.

But this principle undeſervedly depreciates the good things of life; for as they have been given to man by the beneficent author of his being, they cannot fairly be repreſented as neceſſary cauſes of human miſery. It has been ſaid that nothing is great, of which the contempt is great; and it appears not leſs true, that nothing deſerves the title of good, which it is good to deſpiſe. If then, a chance remains that the things of life may be made inſtruments of good, we may poſſibly, by deſpiſing them, ſhew more raſhneſs than wiſdom, and incur the double misfortune

tune of doing injuſtice to them and to ourſelves.

Hardineſs or apathy of mind has alſo been recommended as an effectual defence againſt evil. But it cannot be ſaid that defence is made, when the ſtruggle is declined. Inſtead of encouraging the powers of the ſoul, and giving it new force to meet and ſuſtain the hoſtile aſſault, this principle deprives it even of the paſſive power of reſignation. When it is not permitted to feel any longer, then of neceſſity it ceaſes to endure; and it is deprived of all chance of victory by being thus obliged to ſhrink from the combat.

The truth is, that the patrons of both theſe principles have paſſed the boundaries of right reaſon, and proceeded to extravagance. Within theſe two extremes lies that ſound principle, which will aſſuredly defend the ſoul under the enchantment of good and the preſſure of evil, without excluding it either from

from the honourable character of moderation under the one, or of fortitude under the other. It is equally remote from the hardy ſcorn and the mean love of good, and from impatience and inſenſibility under evil.

There appears a negative repreſentation of this principle in the admonition, "let us not be deſirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another." The Apoſtle ſeems to refer to the two diſtinctions of ſuperior and inferior ſtation; on the one part, he diſſuades a ſpirit of inſult and provocation, which men ſometimes exhauſt on thoſe beneath them; and on the other part, he diſcourages a ſpirit of envy, with which inferiors frequently look up to thoſe above them. Both theſe are founded in that ſort of ſelf-love, which is either jealous and rigorouſly tenacious of its own over-rated greatneſs, or grudges any advantages to another, preſuming a title of its own to them to be far ſuperior to that of the real poſſeſſor.

The

The reverſe of this principle will reach both theſe conditions of human life, and will act beneficially upon each of them, by reſtraining in ſuperiors a diſpoſition to provoke, and in inferiors a propenſity to envy. To the former it will preſerve all the advantages and prevent the dangers of their proſperous condition; and in behalf of the latter, it will alleviate the real and take away the imagined evils of their adverſity.

It is obvious from this ſhort character, that humility is the valuable principle in view; in recommendation of which if obvious and plain obſervations are here recalled to mind, it can only be done with ſome hope of increaſing their influence by means of that recollection. Yet even this taſk is not without difficulty. Such is the extent of humility, that it compriſes in itſelf moſt of thoſe graces, which are either of uſe or ornament to our nature, and indeed to many among them it gives their very exiſ-

tence. Accordingly it is not eaſy to diſtinguiſh the effects of humility from the effects of qualities which ſpring from it, and to eſtimate the value of it ſingly and entirely detached from caſes, which ought perhaps in ſtrictneſs to be referred to moderation, benevolence, candour, and ſimilar graces, of which humility is the reputed parent. For this, however, it may be urged by way of excuſe, that humility, as well as wiſdom, is juſtified in all her children.

Theſe few things being premiſed, let us apply humility to proſperity, and then to adverſity, as a convenient quality and a religious principle.

To begin with the firſt application.

Proſperity has this peculiar diſadvantage, that it cannot but ſuffer by a reverſe of fortune. For this plain reaſon it has much leſs connection

connection with hope than adverſity. But ſince a proſperous condition leaves little to hope, it muſt proportionably leave ſo much the more to fear. Where the reaſon to fear is greateſt, ſecurity is moſt likely to ruin, and if the path is ſlippery, there can be nothing ſo certain to ſupplant as confidence. In truth, we cannot be ſafe, when we have forgotten our wants; and whatever may be the dangers which threaten us from other quarters, it is highly probable that the moſt ſudden and moſt grievous ariſe from inattention to the defects of our nature. When the human faculties are exerted to accompliſh the purpoſes of ambition, or to gratify the love of wealth or of fame, the mind, in a great meaſure ſtrained by this exerciſe, may continue cautious and wakeful in all its powers. But the greateſt danger begins, when the ſtruggle is at an end. When deſire has met with gratification the mind is often lulled into an indolent ſecurity. The few ſtays of virtue, if any remained, are gradually drawn away;

ſocial and benevolent feelings languiſh or expire, and leave a void in the heart. Self-love uſurps that vacant place; and as this principle can make no compariſon that is not to the diſadvantage of others, it arrogates, as due only to ſelf, the tribute of general admiration and homage. But men will commonly refuſe reſpect, when it is ſought only as a ſacrifice to pride, and expected without deſerving it. Accordingly ſelf-love is generally diſappointed. Upon this, the mind is rouſed into a new kind of action. The paſſions grow inflamed and break out into reſentment, and thus what is at firſt only the impatience of diſappointed pride, riſes at length to the violence of inſult. The evil commences in a ſmall and ſtealing ſtream, but ends in a wild and ſweeping torrent.

As the words of St. Paul "provoking one another," are confined to that particular abuſe of proſperity whereby it is rendered inſupportable to others, they ſuggeſt no immediate

diate notice of thoſe evils, which the unreſtrained indulgences of ſenſual affection may have been in the mean while accumulating, till they have left the individual himſelf ſcarcely ſo much of happineſs as may conſiſt merely in the abſence of pain, even till the health of body and mind has been ſacrificed to the licentiouſneſs of nature.

Such ſeem the ſteps by which men too often degenerate, and pervert proſperity, from being the means of general good, to an inſtrument of general offence.

But there is danger not only in the abuſe of ſuperior fortune, but alſo in the abuſe of ſuperior knowledge. For mankind in general are alike moved with a deſire of knowledge, and with a fondneſs of acceding to illuſtrious examples. Hence, ſuperiority in knowledge becomes an important depoſit, in which all have an intereſt, who are placed within the circle of its influence. The evils in-

duced by the perverſion of it, are perhaps more than proportionable to the advantages, that may enſue from its proper application: for the abuſe of the beſt things tends ſooneſt to conſequences the moſt pernicious.

Deſire of knowledge when ill directed, as it introduced the firſt misfortune of man, ſo it continues occaſionally to throw a ſnare in his way. Indeed, if the intereſt of virtue and human happineſs were always as dear as the fame of literary preeminence, the poſſeſſion of knowledge would be in every hand a valuable good. But the reverſe of this is too often ſeen. The powers of many well-informed minds are exerted upon frivolous and ſometimes upon pernicious enquiries, when ſelf-love is the great ſpring that puts them in motion. Real truth is often defaced by the ſubtlety of refinement, or boldly ſacrificed in the wantoneſs of new diſcovery. There is a fancied greatneſs of ſoul in forſaking the beaten road, and ſo the way be

be unexplored, it is not heeded that the footing is unſure. Under ſuch a direction, the mind diſclaims advantages which may be drawn from the experience of others; and in the zeal to eſcape ſuppoſed error and prejudice on one ſide, becomes imperceptibly as miſtaken and more enſlaved on the other. The luſt of innovation gathers ſtrength from the applauſe of many, who regard plain and accuſtomed truth, as ſuch, with indifference or averſion. Thus a mind of this caſt advances alone, having like the fooliſh woman forſaken the guide of her youth, and proceeds on ſtep by ſtep unſettling its principles of a learned or a moral kind, till the enquiries, which it has ſo ardently indulged, end farther from wiſdom, farther from virtue, than they began.

The certain and effectual antidote to this abuſe of ſuperior fortune and to this perverſion of ſuperior knowledge lies in the ſaving diſcipline of humility. Among all the

chances of human things and all the uncertainties of human wiſdom, this principle only can give ſteadineſs to the mind, and balance it againſt every weight, and every wind of doctrine, that would otherwiſe unſettle and diſcompoſe it. Nor is there in its nature any thing, that is ſervile or ignoble. It bears an honourable and independent character, and as it poſſeſſes all the advantages that pride aims at, and eſcapes all the evils it incurs, it is perfectly compatible with the higheſt proſperity of fortune and the greateſt accompliſhments of mind. If the end of pride is manifeſtly the aggrandiſement of ſelf, even to this end humility would go by the ſhorter way. We are taught by a great authority, "that honour ſhall uphold the humble in ſpirit;" and to the truth of the remark pride itſelf is compelled to bear teſtimony, by appearing in diſguiſe and frequently accompliſhing its purpoſes by the aid of counterfeited humility.

If the influence of humility upon the life and manners of a man, acting under a ſcene of

of proſperity, were to be delineated with any tolerable degree of juſtice and accuracy, the view would preſent impreſſions of the moſt exalted and endearing caſt. Some of them may faintly appear in the abſtract which follows.

A profuſion of good things, which ſeem more eaſy to be loſt than enjoyed wiſely, is much too great for men without their proportionate endeavours to deſerve them. And even if the endeavour to deſerve them is proportionate, ſtill they are indeed given but not earned. The good, which men receive, ſtands only in the nature of a depoſit, which may ſoon be called out of their hands. It muſt not then be conſidered as their own; but on what conditions, for what purpoſes, and for what time, they hold it, the abſolute and undoubted owner muſt preſcribe. All good things, then, may change their poſſeſſors; from preparation made for that viciſſitude will flow much of the conſolation to be wiſhed for under the loſs

of

of them. It is then a prudential concern to conduct the uſe of them with moderation, and not to ſuffer habits of indulgence or of pride to grow up, and fix deſires upon the mind, which will become outrageous, if a change ſhould enſue and debar them from their wonted gratification. It is wiſdom to uſe them as means of conciliating the favour of others, and making friends to pity and help upon any diſaſtrous turn. To uſe them as inſtruments of provoking others, is as unſafe, as it ought to be grating. To all may be given a ſpeedy opportunity of repaying double for ſcorn and inſult. If the fall enſues, let them be friends and not foes that muſt look on.

This is a ſhort view of the effects of humility as a principle of convenience; but as a principle of religion, how forcibly will it influence the Chriſtian? Him it will inſtruct that the endeavour to deſerve the good things of life implies ſuch an application of them,

as

as agrees with the deſign of the giver as the rule. He pretends to no intereſt in them, that is not ſubſervient to the intention of him from whom he received them. He obediently uſes them in carrying on the purpoſes of heaven, and labours together with God, by fulfilling the duty of man. He perceives that God hath given him by theſe depoſits the power of furthering the intereſts of divine love; and as the love of God is no contracted principle, he will not ſet up himſelf, as independant of the children of virtue, the truly beloved of God. As they are objects dear to God, they will be alſo dear to him; he will ſeek them with ſollicitude, and befriend them with chearfulneſs, but without oſtentation; the applauſe of his own heart affects him but ſlightly, and he declines with more indifference the applauſe of the world. Virtuous men will find ſomething ſo gentle and mild in his manners, ſo attentive and affectionate in his concern for them, that they ſhall endure his ſuperiority without one envious

envious murmur, and look up to his proſperity with a cordial bleſſing.

In ſtations of authority and power, he will be much leſs pleaſed with his poſſeſſion of eminence, than with the means he has of beneficence. He will watch with ſuſpicious precaution that power in his hands may not corrupt himſelf, nor bind any heavy burdens upon others. In him no intruding ſelf-affection will be permitted to weaken the ſenſe of duty and reſponſibility to God and mankind.

If he cultivates knowledge with ſucceſs, he will apply it without preſumption. The firſt thing he will diſcover, and the laſt he will forget, is the weakneſs of that knowledge. He will therefore read the the book of nature with caution and diffidence, and the book of God with reverence and fear. Of God he will think as Revelation deſcribes him, and neither ſpeculate without it, nor oppoſe to it any privileged ideas

ideas or attachments of his own. He will labour rather to enforce the duty, than to explain the nature, of man, nor will any way weaken the hopes, or the fears, or moral ſanctions, which the word of God puts before him as incentives to virtue. And if his mind ſhould unwarily riſe to the contemplation of things, which lie above the reach of human faculties and want adequate terms of deſcription in human language, he will pauſe in fear of miſtaking the ſhew for the reality of evidence, and where enquiry has not the means of being free, he will not permit it to be licentious.

The application of humility to adverſity was the ſecond thing propoſed; and in the way to that application we may obſerve what a picture humility will draw of adverſity itſelf.

It has been obſerved already that human life is a ſtate of ſuffering, and in the language of the New Teſtament it is called a warfare,

warfare, a fight, and referred to by many other agoniſtical alluſions. In the verſes immediately preceding the text the Apoſtle obſerves, "they that are Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts." And indeed the ſacred writers frequently enforce their principles of ſelf-denial by inferences from the doctrine of the Croſs. When we recollect how far the fall of man, with the dreadful conſequences of it, muſt be aſcribed to the influence of pride, it may appear very reaſonable that any diſpenſation, which provided a remedy for thoſe evils, ſhould be founded in humiliation and ſelf-denial. It ſeems that the Jews and judaizing reaſoners of old and modern times, have conſidered neither the nature of the evils which Chriſtianity was intended to cure, nor the ſpirit of the remedy which it provided, when they took offence at what is called the ſcandal of the Croſs. "He that will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his croſs," are the words of our Lord. If he ſubmitted

to

to make a ſacrifice for us, there is alſo a certain ſenſe in which we are to make ſacrifices for his ſake. So that ſince, upon a general view, life appears a ſtage of ſuffering, on a Chriſtian view, it appears morally ſo. And only pride and preſumption will complain, when that, which is the common lot of human nature, is converted by the parental ſpirit of Chriſtianity, into an inſtrument of promoting the moſt valuable intereſts of man. Thus, under the picture that humility draws, adverſity loſes much of its terror, and ſhews more like an imaginary, than a real evil.

But the miſguided mind of man refuſes the counſel of humility, and reverſes this repreſentation. The pride of human life, and an impatience of ſuffering, unite with an exorbitant longing for abſent good, in aggravating evil. Theſe diſpoſitions are ſtrengthened by indulgence, and, if not ſeaſonably reſtrained, grow violent and at length bear down reaſon and reflection. One of

of them ends in moroſe diſcontent, the other in habitual envy. On their invaſion of the heart, double is the evil that befals it. Benumbed and deadened to the enjoyment of that good which is in poſſeſſion, it it is left alive only to vexation on account of that, which is not. It is not heeded that no condition in human life, however unpromiſing or abject, is totally deſtitute of good. The improvement of that latent good is not the way taken, though it would be the ſure one, to leſſen that evil, which may predominate. But the mind grows reſtleſs in making compariſons and in ſtating them always againſt its own caſe; contrary to the common laws of comparing, it brings diſſimilar things together; it ſets not evil againſt evil, but evil againſt good. From ſuch a compariſon men can only know how much leſs good they poſſeſs than others. If, on the contrary, they compared degrees of evil, they would often find how much leſs of evil is incident to their own condition, than that of their neighbour.

In

In the midſt of ſuch a proceſs as this, if the principle of humility interpoſed its influence, the ſalutary effect of that interpoſition may be eaſily diſcerned. Another train of ſentiments would immediately take poſſeſſion of the mind, and would incline it to proceed rather in a deſcending ſcale, by comparing bad fortune with worſe, low rank with lower, and pain with heavier pain; and then a compariſon ſo conducted could have no unfavourable termination. Thus men might diſcover that they were ſubjected to leſs evil than they ſuſpected, and had received a greater proportion of good than they knew. When by this method they were habituated to look down rather than to look up, and to enquire how happy they compatively were rather than how unfortunate, a check would be put to that admiration of abſent good, which created ſuch anxieties before; there would remain leſs temptation to covet, and to envy. The private peace of men would not be diſturbed by fanciful

deſire, and the offices of ſocial intercurſe would ceaſe to be interrupted by frowardneſs and ſpleen.

Thus far humility would act as a principle of convenience; and it is no leſs eaſy to diſcern that it would act as a motive of duty, and maintain a beneficial influence on the mind of a Chriſtian, as a religious principle. He knows that it was not the intent of his Maker to exempt him from temptation or actual ſuffering; he therefore believes it his appointed duty to forbear and endure. The temptations which attend every ſtation, are, he imagines, always proportionate to the advantages of it: if he ſhould be lifted up higher, more talents will be then truſted to him, and his dangers will be increaſed with his duties. Feeling that he hardly poſſeſſes virtue enough to ſave him in his preſent condition, he fears, if new obligations and new dangers come upon him, that he ſhall have much too little to ſecure him. If any diſcontent

content riſes in his heart, he will check it with the reflection, that he bears leſs evil, and enjoys more good, than he deſerves, and therefore has much more reaſon to bleſs the bounty, than to repine at the ſeverity, of his Maker. And as it is more eaſy to follow than to lead, he apprehends it likely that the good example of others may be more beneficial than his own. He wiſhes alſo that errors in his conduct ſhould reach himſelf only, and never be in the way to caſt an unhappy influence on many. Thus his humility bears a moral tendency, and inclines him to prefer even the certainty of ſuffering in his own perſon, to the chance of becoming the occaſion of offence and injury to others. He ſtrives therefore to reſt with calmneſs in his appointed fortune, and to look even upon ſome calamities, as inſtances of God's mercy preventing greater evils, or as proofs of his own demerit, and therefore ſeaſonable rebukes; and thus endeavours to make himſelf a gainer in either view.

But humility riſes in the eſteem and commands almoſt the veneration of a Chriſtian, when he conſiders it as commanded by his God, and conſecrated by the example of his Saviour. Theſe are ſuch ſanctions, that, independently of all other motives, they would prevail with him, and determine him at all events to lowlineſs of heart. For if thoſe habits of mind, which God requires on our part, did not promote, perhaps even if they counteracted, human happineſs, he would nevertheleſs feel his obligation to obey the command of his Maker. But God has not made virtue ſo difficult or unfriendly; he has joined human duty with human intereſt. The Chriſtian cheriſhes that temper of mind for the ſake of God, which, conſidering the defects and inſtability of ſublunary things, would have been eligible for his own. He ſees, and remembers as a rule to himſelf, that whoever hurries through the confuſions and the ſtruggles of life without the protection of humility, muſt encounter

oppoſition

oppoſition at every turn, and be met by the very ſlights and diſappointments he would ſhun; muſt want every encouragement but that of vain hopes and vain-glory; that his manifold ſtruggles muſt be conducted with difficulty, and be terminated without honour; that he hath offered deſpite to the favour of men, and hath departed from the example of his Lord, "who was meek and lowly in heart."

NOTES

ON

TRACT I.

Page 3. As a principle—of puniſhment.] 1 John iv. 18. φόβον κόλασιν ἔχει.

———Diri conſcia facti
Mens habet attonitos et ſurdo verbere cædit,
Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum.
Juven. Sat. xiii. 192.

Dat pœnas, quiſquis expectat; quiſquis autem meruit, expectat. Senec. Ep. 105. See Wilk. Nat. Rel. p. 386.

P. 4. Indeed, the Divine, &c.] After enumerating the vices of the Gentiles, St. Paul repreſents them as "knowing the judgment of God, that they which do ſuch things are worthy of death." And among the Gentiles there are teſtimonies to the truth of his remark. Plato. Opp. pag. 600. ὁ μὲν δὴ θεὸς, &c. And page 400 and 776. Condemned perſons were ſaid by the Greeks κεραυνῶσθαι. Artemidor.

dor. ii. 3. So alſo by the Latins, Quam Fulmine juſto Et Capito et Numitor ruerint. Juv. Sat. 8. Meurſ. Lycoph. 380. Their mythology repreſents Nemeſis under different but all intimate relations to the Supreme, as the nurſe, the concubine, or the daughter of Jove. Callim. hym. in Jov. et in Dian. 232.

P. 17. No ground appears, &c.] That the wiſdom and the juſtice of dropping the puniſhment of ſin is not diſcoverable by reaſon, has been frequently ſhewn. See Sherl. Diſc. vol. 1. p. 47, &c. Clark. Ev. of Natural and Revealed Religion, and his defender Stebbing, p. 41.

P. 18. Fundamental or only, &c.] Deo ſatis eſt, quod colitur et amatur—non poteſt Amor cum Timore miſceri. Senec. Ep. 47.

P. 20. The promiſe of their future deliverance, &c.] See Shuckford on the Fall, p. 245. Sharpe's ſecond Def. of Ch. p. 6. Sherlock on Proph. Diſc. iii. p. 59, &c. Winder Hiſt. of Knowl. p. 26, 27, 42, &c. Lightfoot Miſcell. 1023.

Ibid. Other favourable notices, &c.] Their ſentence in its very tenor implied the delay of the penalty denounced; a ſtanding hoſtility between them and the tempter—ſorrows to be greatly multiplied

tiplied in conception—continual toil in procuring ſubſiſtence from the ground—embarraſſment from thorns and thiſtles in the livelong cultivation of it—a future poſterity—were things they were taught to expect; and theſe neceſſarily implied that the execution of the ſentence was not immediate but diſtant. Theſe and other circumſtances, taken together with the promiſe of final victory over the ſerpent, could hardly fail of ſuggeſting the hope, that God deſigned they ſhould at length regain what they had at preſent loſt. See Winder's Hiſt. of Knowl. p. 41, &c. Worthington on Red. ch. iii. p. 63. and compare Acts xiii. 32.

P. 22. The ſeed of the Woman] See Gal. iv. 4. Several of the Interpreters, following the Paraphraſt Jonathan, underſtand the exclamation of Eve, on occaſion of Cain's birth, to imply that ſhe expected the promiſed deliverer in him. See Pol. Syn. on the place, and Kennicott's ſecond Diſſert. Compare the words of Lamech, "This ſame ſhall comfort us," &c. It ſeems evident that an expectation of this kind was commonly entertained.

Ibid. Frequent reflection, &c.] To judge of this any one may be enabled by Winder, Hiſt. of Knowl. Sect. 2. and Allix, Reflect. B. i. ch. 8.

Ibid. Occaſional communications, &c.] The Lord God ſent forth and drove out the man from the garden;

garden, that is, by divine meſſage or divine appearance; and if with either, moſt probably not without ſome communications, of a tendency to ſupport that hope which the promiſe had given. Divine communications are plainly implied in the whole ſtory of Cain. See Law. Conſid. p. 53, &c. Whatever might be the way in which God ſhewed the reſpect he had to Abel's offering, the very intelligibility of it ſeems to imply divine communication either before or then made. That ſuch were not thought uncommon has been concluded from Job vi. 10. xxiii. 12. xxix. 4. xxiii. 15, 23.

P. 23. Early in the lifetime, &c,] Before the 130th year of the world. Both Cain and Abel made oblation, and as it ſeems at a ſtated time and at one place; and both ſeem ſo far to have acted under the ſame motives of duty, and the ſame ſenſe of a particular direction when and where they ought to worſhip. In ſome points then they agreed; and ſo far even Cain may be ſaid to have acted by faith; he came to worſhip God, and wiſhed to do it acceptably. That faith then, in which Abel was ſingle, ſeems not to have related merely to God's exiſtence and providence, but rather to ſome particular revelation. And the promiſe of a Deliverer is the only one that Moſes had yet brought into view. And every revelation, by containing ſome poſitive inſtitution, was

an

an object not only of faith as to what God had then declared, but alſo of the "obedience of faith," Rom. iv. 11. as to what he had enjoined. God beſtows bleſſings by the uſe of means; and in any caſe where the means are wanting, the bleſſing will be wanting alſo. As to the ground of faith in Abel, ſee Epiſt. to Hebr. xi. 13. "Theſe all, (i. e. incluſively from Abel the firſt to Sarah the laſt) died in faith," &c. It appears not that Abel received any temporal promiſe; moſt probably then his faith had for its ground a promiſe of a different caſt. See Kennicot's ſecond Diſ. Shuckford on the Fall, Pref. p. 16.

Ibid. Viſibly accompanied.] See the Writers quoted by Whitby on Heb. xi. 4. "he obtained witneſs that he was righteous."

Ibid. In all, &c.] Reſpecting the origin of ſacrifices, ſee Winder's Hiſt. of Knowl. p. 28. Jortin Serm. vol. vi. p. 35. and particularly Laws Con. p. 49. and the ſubſequent pages, with the notes there: and Life of Chriſt, note ϖ. Till after the fall of man external religion is not heard of; nor does it appear that, without warrant from God, to ſlay a beaſt, as Abel did, was a lawful action; it ſeems therefore extremely difficult to ſuppoſe that ſacrifices were the device of man.

P. 25. A much more ſacrifice] Afterwards in the Bible of Elizabeth, the verſion was "a greater ſacrifice."

ſacrifice". See Kennicot's ſecond Diſſert. Shuckf. note, p. 104. Pref. to Diſc. on the Fall. After Cain's offering Moſes mentions no oblation of fruits of the ground only, till the giving of the law. There might be ſuch during that interval; but then the only inſtance, in which he has mentioned that ſort of ſacrifice during that period, is in this contraſt of it with an animal one, and then it was rejected.

P. 26. Frequent communications, &c.] Eſpepecially when it is conſidered that the children of Seth had ſeparated themſelves from the children of men (as they are called by way of diſtinction, Gen. vi. 2.) and maintained ſo much real religion, as to procure themſelves the title of ſons of God. See Shuckf. Conn. B. i. p. 42. Of the effects of the promiſe in the righteous family of Seth, See Law Conſid. p. 59.

P. 28. expiatory ſacrifice] So Joſephus conſidered it. Antiq. L. i. c. 4. See Stillingfl. on Suff. of Chriſt, p. 223. and Eſſay on Nature and Deſign, of Sacrif. 231. It was an holocauſt, from which euchariſtical ſacrifices are commonly diſtinguiſhed in Scripture.

P. 29. To the line of Shem] That is, to the line of the younger in preference to that of the elder, although

although both had been equally dutiful to him. The point is ſet in a clear light by Sherl. on Proph. Diſc. IV. p. 102, &c.

Ibid. To Abraham, &c.] That the circumſtances, as far as they went, in the ſacrifice of Iſaac, the Child of Promiſe, were virtually to him a repetition of the Promiſe, See Mede, Diſc. 44. pag. 249. Jortin, Serm. vol. 1. pag. 33, &c.

Ibid. Univerſal bleſſing. Gen. xxvi. 4. and xxviii. 14. That characteriſtic may be eaſily diſcerned in the ſeveral repetitions of the promiſe; and it was particularly noticed. See Eccluſ. xliv. 22. "The bleſſing *of all men* and the covenant." The three Chaldee Paraphraſts agree with Chriſtians in the aim and purport of Jacob's prophecy. See Mede. Diſc. on Gen. xlix. 10. pag. 34. See alſo Newton, Diſc. on Proph. Edwards's Texts, vol. 4. pag. 1. Sherl. on Proph. Diſc. 6. pag. 146. Sharpe, Argument for Chriſtianity, pag. 6, 7. not. and chap. 4. pag. 118. How ſtrongly Jacob reſted in this faith appears from Gen. xlviii. 15, 16, 18. As to what the bleſſing promiſed to Abraham and Jacob was, ſee Micah vii. 19, 20.

P. 30. Prophets, &c.] Among theſe the author of the book of Job may be numbered. See chap. xix. 25, 27.

P. 35.

P. 35. The ſlave of idolatrous ſuperſtition] On the words of Cicero, de N. D. lib. 2. non enim Philoſophi ſolum ſed etiam majores noſtri religionem a ſuperſtitione ſeparaverunt, Lomeier, de Luſtrationibus Vet. Gent. makes the following comment; Religionem igitur cultum Dei ex Amore, ſuperſtitionem eorundem Deorum cultum ſed ex Metu ſolo, profectum eſſe voluit. Qui quidem Metus, rationis expers, animum perturbat, territumque ligat, unde metum δεῖμα, quod ligamentum, Græci dixerunt.

Ibid. Soon after him.] Hyde Rel. Vet. Perſ. pag. 58. Eutychii Annal. pag. 56 and 59. Suid. in v. Σερουχ. Comp. Joſh. xxiv. 15.

P. 36. The ſanction of divine example] See Pſalm. lix. 21. Plato de Legg. lib. i. 776. Terent. Eunuch. Act. III. Sc. 5.

P. 38. Τὸ θεῖον, &c.] See Plut. de Herodoti Malign. Cum autem τὸ δαιμόνιον et τὸ θεῖον dicerent, Deum ſupremum, divinitatemque mundi moderatricem, intelligebant. Meurſ. ad Lycophr. 1472. Comp. Wiſd. of Sol. xiv. 29. Philoſtr. Vit. Soph. lib. iii. p. 575. Ed. Olear. Tacit. Hiſt. lib. i. Non eſſe curæ Diis ſecuritatem noſtram, eſſe Ultionem. Plutarch repreſents the ſuperſtitious man as οἰόμενον μὲν εἶναι θεὸς, εἶναι δὲ λυπηρὸς καὶ βλαβερὸς: and elſewhere

elſewhere ſays ἀνάγκη καὶ μισεῖν τον δεισιδαίμονα καὶ φοβεῖσθαι τὲς θεὲς.

P. 40. In complication with him.] This is the expreſſion of Cudw. Intell. Syſt. 515.

Ibid. Strange and foreign gods] Gyrald. Syntag. 17. Philoſtrat. lib. 6.

Ibid. One comprehenſive invocation] Theophyl. and Grot. on Act. xvii. 23. Porphyr. de Abſtin. paſſim. Plut. de Orac. defect. Millan's Hiſtory of the Propagation of Chriſtianity. vol. ii. chap. 7.

Ibid. in Attica] Ariſtoph. Nub. 304.

Ibid. The Deity reſpectively, &c.] τῷ προσήκοντι θεῷ. Diog. Laert. in Epimenide. Macrob. 3. 9. Ludov. Viv. ad Aug. de Civ. Dei. cap. 17. Glaſs. Philol. Sac. pag. 1479. Philopatr. (ſi ſit) Luciani, νὴ τὸν ἀγνωστὸν ἐν Ἀθηναῖς, and the ſame dialogue at the end. Suid. v. Τιμασίων. Œcumen. on Acts xvii. 23. gives the inſcription of the altar; ſee alſo Voſſ. de Idololat. lib. i. c. 2. Selden de Diis Syr. Proleg. c. 3.

P. 41. There was hazard, &c.] Steſichor. Epigr. 87. ed. Oxf. et Schol. Eurip. Oreſt. 249. Diique, Deæque Omnes, was the language of invocation, Georgic. lib. 1. ne quod numen prætereat, was the comment. Serv. ad loc. Juv. Sat. xiii. 234. Diod. Sicul. lib. 23. p. 739. and 756. Plut. de Placit. Phil.

Phil. lib. 1. cap. 6. ἀφοσιέμενοι, ὡς χαλεπὲς ὄντας καὶ βιαίους. Porphyr. de Abſtin. 2. Sect. 37, 40, 42, repreſents it as the opinion not only of the vulgar but of the philoſophers likewiſe, that all δαιμονια would hurt thoſe that neglected their eſtabliſhed offerings. Whitb. Neceſ. of Chriſt. Rev. p. 191.

P. 43. Coſtlineſs, &c.] Of this Cicero complains, 2. Legg. 335. See alſo Plat. Alcib. ii. p. 132. Ed. Etw. Of the popular opinion in this point, the advice of Helenus to Hector, Il. vi. 90, &c. is a ſtrong teſtimony. See the note of the Engliſh Tranſlator.

Ibid. Magnificent offerings, &c.] Juv. Sat. xiii. 147. Meurſ. not. ad Lycophr. 77.

P. 44. Screaming out their execrations, &c.] Herod. 2. 39. Plut. de Iſ. et Oſ. Stillingf. Suff. of Chriſt. 248. Salluſt, ſpeaking of the blood (it was thought human) which Catiline carried round to the conſpirators, goes on, cum poſt execrationem omnes deguſtaviſſent, ſicuti in ſolennibus ſacris fieri ſolet. Virg. Quæ ſibi quiſque timebat, Unius in miſeri exitium converſa tulere.

Ibid. The blood of men] Human ſacrifices are attributed to the Thebans, Corinthians, Meſſenians, Temeſſenſes, by Pauſanias; to the Getes, by Herod. lib. 4. to the Leucadians by Strabo, lib. 10.

to

to the Lacedæmonians by Fulgentius and Theodoret, Serm. 7. to the Athenians by Sch. Ariſtoph. Plut. et Equit. to the Goths by Jornandes Rer. Gætic. cap. 5. pag. 19. to the Gauls by Cicer. pro Fonteio, 10. Cæſar de B. G. 6. pag. 133. to the Friſii by Scholan. deſc. Friſ. to the Heruli, by Procop. lib. 2. to the Maſſilienſes by Petron. Sat. p. 4. Servius on Æn. 3. to the Romans by Livy, B. 22. pag. 394. Schol. on Horat. Ep. ad. Piſon. v. 16. Plin. N. H. lib. 3. cap. 2. to the Britons by Tacit. Annal. 14, 13. et de Mor. Germ. 542. Ed. Amſtel. to the Americans by Martyr. de nov. orb. decad. 4. cap. 8. to the Phœnicians by Philo de Phœnic. Hiſt. apud Euſeb. P. Ev. 4. 16.

Ibid. Slaves were conſecrated at Athens, &c.] Suid. in v. περιψῆμα. Hoffman. in Exp. Feſt. and in v. Oſiris, Mithras.

P. 45. The oracle] Liv. Hiſt. lib. 5. p. 255. Dion wonders at the report of two men having been ſacrificed at Rome, ὅτε γὰρ ἡ Σίβυλλα ἔχρησεν: as if the oracle ſometimes gave that direction. Ælian. V. Hiſt. 11. 28. See Spencer's note on Origen. contra Celſ. lib. 1. ed. Cantab. pag. 24.

Ibid. Quæ fuit Eorum, &c.] Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 3. cap. 6.

Ibid. Cum tantâ, &c.] Loccen. Antiq. Goth. l. 1. p. 5. See alſo Jortin. Rem. on E. H. vol. v. p. 253.

Ibid. Deities confeſſedly evil, &c.] The idols of

Canaan, to whom children were ſacrificed, are called in the common verſion of the Old Teſtament "devils," but in the original "the deſtroyers." It is poſſible that they might have been deities confeſſedly evil. The prevalence, however, of offering human ſacrifice to ſuch deities is certain. Schol. Ariſtoph. Plut. on the word κάθαρμα. Porphyr. de Abſtin. 2, 37, 40, 42. Pauſan. 4, 233. Macrob. 1. cap. 7. Olai Mag. Hiſt. Sept. 3. c. 6. and before at p. 32. Cudw. I. S. 223 and 519. Plin. N. H. lib. 2. c. 7.

P. 46. A forwardneſs of mind, &c.] Juv. Sat. xiii. 230.

P. 47. Parts of the world unknown, &c.] Anton. de Solis Hiſt. Mexic. When the Inca was troubled with diſeaſe, the Peruvians ſacrificed ten children; at his coronation two hundred; and when a father was ſick, his ſon was offered to the Sun with ſupplication that the Deity would ſpare the father and be ſatisfied with the ſon. D'Acoſt. Hiſt. d. Ind. lib. 5. cap. 19. See Viginere. not. on Cæſ. Com. pag. 317. Montaigne Eſſ. lib. 1. c. 19.

P. 48. In Carthage, &c.] Fragment. Sanchuniath. Euſeb. P. E. lib. 1. c. 10. Plato in Minoe. Plin. lib. 36. cap. 5. Juſtin. lib. 18. and Philo Bybl. apud Euſeb. P. E. 3, 16. calls it a ſtanding cuſtom, that in public calamities the ruler ſhould ſacrifice the deareſt of his children to the avenging deities.

deities. See Grotius on Deuteron. xviii. 10. and Diodor. Sicul. lib. 23. pag. 739 and 756. They are even ſaid to have made two hundred ſuch victims at once. Peſc. Feſtus on Lactant. Div. Inſt. 1. cap. 21. Scriptural inſtances of the cuſtom may be found, 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. 2 Kings xvii. 31. and Jerem. vii. 31. xix. 2, 5. Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. xxiii. 37. 39. It was the practice in Canaan, before the Iſraelites came thither, Levit. xx. 23. and it laſted till the time of Joſiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. It was the practice at Rome till the time of Tiberius. Tertull. Apol. cap. 9.

P. 53. Apoſtolical argument, &c.] Heb. x. 26.

P. 55. Refuge from the oppreſſive terror, &c.] Plut. de Superſtitione, τέλος τῦ μὴ νομίζειν θεοὺς, μὴ φοβεῖσθαι. Juv. Sat. xiii. 87. nullo credant mundum Rectore moveri,—Atque ideo intrepidi quæcunque altaria tangunt. See alſo Cudw. I. S. 664.

Ibid. If the ſuppoſed indifference, &c.] Cic. de N. D. 1. pag. 7. and p. 46, 51. Ed. Dav. and the next page, his terroribus, &c.

Ibid. Divine power was ſimply beneficent, &c.] Cic. de Off. lib. 2. num iratum timemus Jovem? At hoc equidem commune eſt omnium philoſophorum, non eorum modo qui Deum nihil habere ipſum negotii dicunt, et nihil exhibere alteri, ſed eorum etiam, qui Deum ſemper agere aliquid et moliri volunt, nunquam nec iraſci Deum, nec nocere. See further Whitby Neceſ. of Chriſt. Revel. p. 93.

P. 57. Not in nature, &c.] Plato. Theætet. pag. 167. Hobbes de Cive, pag. 343. and Leviathan, pag. 24 and 63. Cudw. on Etern. and Immut. Morality.

Ibid. Of the neceſſity of human actions.] Plut. de Stoic. Rep. Cic. de Fato. N. 30.

Ibid. If Minos would judge, &c.] Lucian in Jov. Confutat. pag. 127. Ed. Græv. Euſeb. P. E. lib. 6. c. 7. 260. τὶ ἥμας τὶννυται ὁ Ζεῦς ἄλλ' ἢ ἑαυτὸν; &c. Mercurius was one of thoſe philoſophers who maintained this opinion, but with ſome reſerve, from his view of its effects on bad men; τὰς δὲ αἰτίας τᾶ κακᾶ εἱμαρμένη ἀναφέροντες, ἢ ἀφέξεται ποτὲ πάντος ἔργα κακᾶ. Stob. Ecl. Ph. pag. 76.

Ibid. Upon the ſcheme, &c.] Hume. Eſſay on Lib. and Neceſſity. Indeed ſome advocates for the ſcheme of neceſſity endeavour to ſet aſide this conſequence.

P. 66. The ſtanding cuſtom, &c.] Compare the language of God reſpecting the iniquity of Eli. 1 Sam. iii. 14. As the ſacrifice and burnt-offering were in common uſe for all expiatory caſes, they might be uſed in that of Eli.

P. 74. It may poſſibly appear, &c.] If what is here attributed to Moſes ſhould ſeem to the reader, however I may apprehend otherwiſe, to have more of refinement than ſolidity, I can only ſay that it does not affect the main argument purſued.

P. 84.

P. 84. Like unto Moſes.] See the reſemblance between Chriſt and him purſued through a variety of circumſtances. Jortin. Rem. on E. H. vol. 1. pag. 202, &c.

Ibid. This became more and more plain, &c.] See Iſaiah xlii. 4. li. 4. That the people of Iſrael actually entertained ſuch an expectation appears from 1 Maccab. xiv. 41.

P. 97. Few unprejudiced minds, &c.] If the prevalence of the Goſpel could be aſcribed to natural cauſes only, ſtill it may be true and of divine authority. To prove it ſeaſonable will not prove it falſe, although Mr. Gibbon, with Bayle, Voltaire, Lord Shafteſbury, and the Author of the Life of Homer, ſeem diſpoſed to ſuſpect it on that account. The queſtion remains, whether human things had not been conducted gradually to ſuch a ſituation as to favour its admiſſion. If they had, there is no preſumption of human impoſture in it. The decline of Paganiſm was not total; it was in a condition to ſtruggle; the law of Moſes was in force, as a divine diſpenſation; over both the Goſpel prevailed. The argument from the prevalence of Chriſtianity goes, not only upon the cauſes that favoured, but alſo on thoſe that obſtructed, its progreſs; and when drawn out, with a due reſpect to both parts of the caſe, has great weight. See Jortin. Diſcourſes on Chriſtianity. Diſc. 2. It is remarked that Chriſtianity was much aided in its

progreſs by the decline of ancient, namely of Pagan, prejudice. But even admitting it true that Chriſtianity was aſſiſted in its progreſs by this cauſe, ſtill it may be obſerved, that the decline of Pagan prejudice does not appear merely accidental. The cauſes of that decline are indeed ſaid to be theſe: "the contagion of ſceptical writings diffuſed in the minds of men;" "and the faſhion of incredulity, deſcending from the higheſt to the loweſt rank of people." But theſe appear effects of a higher cauſe, which was not accidental, but conſtitutionally inherent in the ſyſtem itſelf, as a principle of its own decline. It lay in the inſufficiency of Pagan religion to propitiate the divine Judge of the world, and to abate the natural fear of his vengeance. Hence it naturally followed that incredulity ſhould grow into faſhion. And which of theſe two cauſes, that aſſigned by the author of the remark, or that ariſing from the view here taken of Paganiſm, reſts upon the fairer ground of probability, and is moſt decidedly equal to the conſequence, may be left to the judgement of every diſcerning and impartial mind.

We are told alſo, that the practice of ſuperſtition is ſo congenial to the multitude, that if they are forcibly awakened, they ſtill regret the loſs of their pleaſing viſion; i. e. unleſs I miſapprehend the words, the neceſſity of having ſome ſuperſtition, or other, to practice is ſo urgent upon the vulgar, that after

after they have diſcarded one mode of it, they will not be at reſt till they have adopted another. But of this painful and comfortleſs ſituation the cauſes ſuggeſted by the view we have taken of Paganiſm, are theſe; conſciouſneſs of ſin, and fear of Divine vengeance, preſſing even with aggravation upon the mind, and with no expedients at hand to mitigate it, but ſuch as had already proved without effect. From which of theſe cauſes, the ſituation of men would be rendered moſt certainly and moſt deeply painful and comfortleſs, may be left, as before, to the deciſion of every conſiderate and candid mind. I conceive it to be true, that Paganiſm had declined, not accidentally, but by failing upon general experience to pacify the fearful conſcience of ſinners, and propitiate an offended God, and had left a very numerous portion of humankind in a painful and comfortleſs ſituation for want of any other means of expiating ſin, and alleviating the fear of puniſhment, but thoſe, in which they had already been diſappointed; and therefore that Chriſtianity, as it provided a ſacrifice for ſin, and offered pardon to ſinners, had ſo great an advantage in the compariſon that it would naturally be received with preference and favour. There appears much uncertainty, to ſay no more, in the ſuggeſtion, that "an object much leſs deſerving would have filled the vacant place in the human heart," when we remember that

Chriſtianity.

Chriſtianity offered (what Paganiſm had left ſtill to be ſought) univerſal forgiveneſs of ſins.

Then let this capital excellence, the doctrine of Univerſal forgiveneſs, calculated above all others to welcome the Goſpel to the ſouls of all men, be admitted to its proper rank and effect among the cauſes aſſigned for the early prevalence of Chriſtianity. The Goſpel was evidently adapted to the wants and painful ſituation of men, by the doctrine it contains, of a voluntary ſacrifice for ſin, accepted of God, and univerſal remiſſion of ſin thereby obtained. It was likely that this great prerogative ſhould conciliate notice; and becauſe Chriſtianity accumulated proofs, internally and externally, that the forgiveneſs of ſin, which it propoſed, had been the ancient promiſe, and was the preſent offer of God, it would be as likely that it ſhould gather ſtrength and prevail. No ground then appears for an intimation that it is ſuſpicious, becauſe it was ſuited to the neceſſities of mankind.

P. 101. The ſacrifice of Chriſt was ever the ſole inducement with God to grant indemnity.] Accordingly, Heb. ix. 15. he is ſtyled, "the Mediator of the new teſtament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt teſtament, they which are called might receive the promiſe of eternal inheritance." See alſo Ep. Rom. iii. 25.

NOTES

NOTES

ON

TRACT II.

Page. 125. Since the condemnation, &c.] See Rom. viii. 3. There ſeems to be an obſcurity in the verſion, from which the original text is free. The words of St. Paul are υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας, καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας. As in the Old Teſtament περὶ ἁμαρτίας is commonly connected with the name of the ſacrifice, μοσχον, αμνον, &c. (See Whitby on this place) to denote them reſpectively to be ſin-offerings, ſo alſo the expreſſion is to be completed here, υἱὸν περὶ ἁμαρτίας. The verſion would then run thus, "God ſending his own Son, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and as a ſin-offering," &c.

P. 138. In fact, then, penitence, &c.] This has been frequently ſhewn, but no where, that I know of,

of, with more ſtrength and clearneſs than in the very Eſſay which gave occaſion to this Tract. Cicero, as Dr. Shuckford remarks, goes no farther than this, quem pænitet peccâſſe, penè eſt innocens.

P. 140. The effect of that principle, &c.] To prevent any miſconception, it would perhaps have been a more proper expreſſion, "ſome effect of that principle." My meaning is, that there is no caſe of ſin, with no effect of the judicial principle enſuing.

P. 146. Yet the juſtifier, &c.] So Whitby in his Paraphr. In the original καὶ, &c. So perhaps in the Greek Epigram,

Δελ☞ Επικτητ☞ γενομην, καὶ σωμ' ἀναπηρ☞,
Καὶ πενιαν Ιρ☞, καὶ φιλ☞ ἀθανατοις,

"and yet beloved of the Gods." Compare Heb. iii. 9. ἐδοκιμασάν με, καὶ εἶδον, &c. "proved me and yet they ſaw." But Glaſſ. Phil. Sac. de Conjunctione, p. 805. renders it, although, which might be done in the paſſage to the Romans.

P. 150.] For ſome of theſe, and for other ſimilar inſtances, ſee Jortin's Serm. vol. vii. p. 192. For the ſin of Ham, Canaan was ſubjected to a curſe. Gen. ix. 25. The ſons of Achan were puniſhed together with their father for his, and not their, wickedneſs. Joſh. vii. 24. The puniſhment of Ahab's

Ahab's ſin was not inflicted upon him, but upon his ſon, 1 Kings xxi. 29. So alſo to David upon his repentance, the prophet ſaid, "thou ſhalt not die, howbeit the child that is born of thee ſhall ſurely die." Latin. Verſ. Dominus tranſtulit peccatum tuum, i. e. its puniſhment. See Grot. de Satisf. cap. 4. Stebbing, Chriſt. Juſtified, 109, &c.

P. 152. prevailed with God, &c.] 2. Sam. xxi. 13, 14.

P. 156. Joſiah, by an eſpecial, &c.] 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27, 28. and xxxv. 24.

NOTES

NOTES

ON

TRACT III.

Pag. 190. That filial and parental relation, &c.] So evident had been his livelong acknowledgement of the Virgin for his real and proper parent, that upon his aſſuming the character of Chriſt it became the queſtion of the publick, "Is not this the ſon of Mary?" &c.

P. 193. Thy throne, O God, &c.] Compare Pſalm xlv. 7. "God, even thy God," &c. In the margin, "O God, even thy God," &c. So alſo Cocceius and Surenhuſius tranſlate it, "O Deus, Deus tuus," and the laſt of them renders the Greek expreſſion of the Apoſtle, ὁ Θεος, vocatively alſo. Καταλλαγ. 598.

Ibid. One of the proper names of God, &c.] El, in the ſingular, is not to be confounded with the

the plural form. In the laſt it is often an appellative, in the firſt it ſtands as the proper and peculiar name of God. And from a variety of Scriptural places it has been ſhewn that El, uſed as the name of God, denotes not merely the divine power, but the divine nature. Calov. Script. Anti-Socin. lib. p. 147.

Ibid. "I have made thee a God unto Pharaoh."] Hilar. lib. 7. de Trin. non dicitur Deus genuiſſe Moſem Deum, ſed conſtituiſſe.

P. 198. The name of Jehovah, &c.] In Scripture the names of God are given to one angel, and not to many, and one angel ſo acts and ſpeaks as if he was God, and not many. And this peculiar circumſtance ſeems to imply, that this One is perſonally what he is called, and what his action and words ſhew him to be. See Calov. Scrip. Anti-Socin. vol. 1. pag. 129.

P. 199. This has been frequently ſhewn, &c.] Whoever would here recur to the objections made by Crellius, muſt make them good againſt the anſwers of Calovius, Bp. Pearſon, and many others. For myſelf I ſpeak according to what I ſee, or think I ſee, of the ſuperiority of evidence.

Ibid. A nativity from everlaſting.] In the paſſage of Micah, the expreſſions "goings forth," and that immediately

immediately preceding "ſhall come forth," are verſions of the ſame word in different forms. It occurs in many places of Scripture in the ſenſe of natal egreſſion, Gen. x. 14. 2 Kings xx. 18. Job. 1. 21. Iſaiah xi. 1. See Pol. Syn. "From of old, from everlaſting." Arab. verſ. a diebus æternis. Syr. a principio, a diebus æternis. Jonath. Chal. Paraph. "ab. æternitate." See Iſai. xl. 28. xliii. 13. and Dr. Pocock's note on Mic. v. 2. St. Paul ſtyles Chriſt Πρωτότοκος πασης κτίσεως: which paſſage may be rendered, as Dr. Clarke admits, "born before all creation." So Septuag. 2 Sam. xix. 43. Πρωτότοκος ἐγὼ ἢ συ;

P. 202. Son of God is but another title for Meſſiah, &c.] Socinus advanced this opinion, and Grotius, Hobbes, and Mr. Locke, with others, have defended it. But it ſeems that they confound a natural and an official title, which the Jews diſtinguiſhed, ſee John v. 18. x. 30, 33, Chriſt at the time juſtifying their conſtruction of the title, Son of God, in the natural ſenſe. St. Paul, Ep. Galat. iv. 8. ſays, "when they knew not God, they did ſervice to them which by nature are no gods." If St. Paul did not believe that Chriſt, to whom in many parts of his writings he pays divine honours, was God by nature, he in his Chriſtian ſtate incurs that very idolatry which he objects to his converts in their heathen ſtate.

Ibid.

Ibid. He did not decline, but defended.] It ſeems inconceivable that any one, who had conſidered this converſation, ſhould venture to ſay that Chriſt never pretended to be more than a man like men.

P. 208. The man that is my fellow, &c.] Vulgat. virum cohærentem mihi. Chald. et Pagnin. ſocium. Vatabl. coëqualem mihi. The original word bears two ſignifications; 1ſt, one near or joined in neighbourhood to another; 2. near, next to, beſide, anſwerable, correſponding to. Tayl. Hebrew Concord. v. 1382. Junius renders it, virum proximum, qui ſtat e regione alterius, and conſiders it as applied by the Father to Chriſt, as alter idem, "the expreſs image of his perſon," as Heb. i. 3. Cocceius, cited by Calovius, obſerves that it ſignifies contra-poſitionem in æquali ſitu, diſpoſitione, formâ, magnitudine, jure; and ſays alſo (Obſervat. in Joh. cap. i. p. 88.) that by the "fellow" of a man muſt be underſtood a man, and by the "fellow" of Jehovah one that is what Jehovah is.—Glaſs. Philol. Sac. de Nom. pag. 104. virum mihi proximum, quaſi dicat, qui eſt alter ego, qui eſt in ſinu meo, John i. 18. qui eſt character hypoſtaſeos meæ, &c. Heb. i. 3. We are directed by the marginal reference to John x. 30. xiv. 10. 11. Phil. ii. 6. In the laſt of theſe places the Apoſtle attributes

butes three ſeveral ſtates to Chriſt: firſt, the form of God; then, the form of a ſervant; then, a ſtate of exaltation. With the expreſſion of Zechariah compare the character which the Apoſtle gives of the firſt of the three, ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ. As to the phraſe ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο, ſee the note of Mr. Toup on φωρίῳ τινὸς ἐφαπτόμενος. Longin. de Subl. Sect. 4. p. 11.

P. 210. God laid down his life, &c.] So, Acts ii. 28. from whence Jortin ſuppoſes Ignatius Ep. ad Eph. took his expreſſion, ἐν αἵματι Θεοῦ. From which paſſage alone, even if there were not others in the ſhort Epiſtles of Ignatius, it ſeems ſufficiently clear that the doctrine of the Divinity of the Redeemer was not ſtarted by Juſtin.

NOTES

ON

TRACT IV.

Page 244. Mutual recognition in another life.] It appears from Scripture that the ſtate of men in a future life will be a ſtate of ſociety. "Many ſhall come from the eaſt and weſt, and ſhall ſit down with Abraham and Iſaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." The angels at the end of the world will be commanded to gather together the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them," and to gather the wheat" into the barn of their Lord. See alſo Matt. xxv. 32. St. Paul inſiſts upon this expectation as a ſource of conſolation and joy; "God hath raiſed up us together, and hath made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus." He ſpeaks elſewhere of "the innumerable company of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and the aſſembly of the Church of the firſtborn, who are written in heaven." See alſo Rev. vii. 13. and a Diſſertation of Dr. Price on this ſubject.

Nor can it be objected that, as there are "many manſions" in the kingdom of heaven, the inequalities of human virtue will be likely to prevent the aſſociation of the bleſſed in a future life. From inſtances upon earth we may know that God beſtows upon the heart of every individual, in a ſtate of aſſociation more or leſs happineſs proportionate to the degree of his virtue. There ſeems then little reaſon to conclude that inequalities in human virtue, which may occaſion their being rewarded unequally, will prevent their being rewarded together. The contrary may rather be preſumed from the words of Chriſt; after he had told the diſciples, "in my Father's houſe are many manſions," he added, "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be alſo." If there were differences in the virtue and faith of the diſciples, which ſeveral particulars may induce us to ſuppoſe, the aſſurance of Chriſt that they together ſhould be with him in heaven, will appear of deciſive weight. The firſt and the laſt in the kingdom of heaven are alſo expreſſions which ſeem to imply that men will be aſſociated there in a ſtate of happineſs.

To this conſideration we may alſo add, that the ſacred Writers frequently repreſent the human mind as looking back from another life on that which had preceded. The queſtion, "have we not prophe-

ſied

ſied in thy name, and in thy name caſt out devils," implies a remembrance of things and actions preceding; and in another, "Lord, when ſaw we thee an-hungred and fed thee, or thirſty and gave thee drink," the reality of certain actions is diſputed, becauſe they were not remembered.

Theſe conſiderations, that the ſtate of men in a future life will be ſocial, and that they will be then the ſame in mind or ſoul that they were before, ſeem to obviate any preſumption againſt the credibility of their mutual recognition; and, if that can be proved, it will become incredible that they will not ſubſiſt in a future life the ſame alſo in body that they are in the preſent.

P. 247.] See Matt. x. 28. If by the deſtruction of the body and the ſoul in hell the miſery of man will be completed, it ſeems reaſonable to preſume that by the life of the body and the ſoul in heaven his happineſs alſo will be accompliſhed.

P. 249. I know that my Redeemer, &c.] Though the Jewiſh interpreters, and Grotius, Bp. Patrick and Dr. Hody, did not apply this paſſage to a future reſurrection, yet it ſeems clear that it ought to be ſo applied. See Sherl. on Proph. Diſſert. 2. p. 229.

THE END.

E R R A T A.

Page 3. line 11. *read*, the pleaſures and pains—p. 13. l. 5. *dele*, it—p. 20. laſt line, *read*, tranſgreſſion—p. 148. l. 10. *read*, ſacrifice of his human nature—p. 235. l. 9. *read*, degrees of change.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

The Reſurrection of the Body, deduced from the Reſurrection of Chriſt, and illuſtrated from his Transfiguration. *A Sermon before the Univerſity on Eaſter-monday.* 1777. 4to.

The ſame in 8vo. 1779.

The Prophecies and Teſtimony of John the Baptiſt, and the parallel Prophecies of Jeſus Chriſt, conſidered with a view to ſhew that new and original circumſtances, which they reſpectively added to foregoing prophecies, aſcertain the divine miſſion of both. *In Eight Sermons at the Bampton-Lecture*, 1782.